TRENDS IN EDUCATION

6

HM Inspectorate Today
Counselling in Schools
Changing Examinations
The 'Social' School
Organising the Curriculum

APRIL 1967

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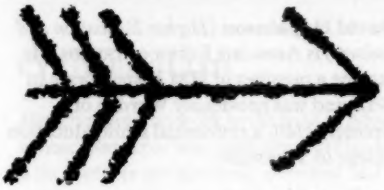

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The Editorial Advisory Board of Trends in Education *consists of senior officers of the Department and senior members of the Inspectorate. The Chief Information Officer is general editor, supported by an executive editor (Martyn Clémans) and an associate editor (David Hopkinson, HMI). Correspondence should be addressed to the executive editor.*

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The opinions expressed in Trends in Education *are the writers' own. They may not necessarily be in accordance with the views of the Department of Education and Science*

In this article the Senior Chief Inspector describes how HM Inspectorate is adapting to current changes in the educational system.

HMI Today

CYRIL ENGLISH

Most people who work in the field of education in this country come into contact sooner or later with some of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools. The contacts are generally personal and are limited to a few inspectors and to a specific area of education. The Inspectorate also meets a large number of people from the world of industry, of business and the professions. persons who have little detailed knowledge of the educational system and in particular of the workings of HMI. Finally, a substantial number of visitors from abroad, teachers, educational administrators and others seek information about our educational system and from time to time ask for information about the work of HMI. The changing pattern of education in this country and the number of new agencies now concerned with research and development have led many people to enquire how the Inspectorate is adapting itself to meet these changes.

HM Inspectors of Schools operate in England, Wales and Scotland. Inspectorates for England and Wales work in close association and report to the Department. The Scottish Inspectorate reports to the Scottish Education Department. There are close similarities between these Inspectorates but there are also some differences; the following account is written particularly with the Inspectorate for England in mind. The range of inspector activity is from nursery education to higher education, including a substantial amount of university level work; but it stops short of the universities themselves, which is the only sector of the English educational system with which the Inspectorate is not officially concerned.

The title can be confusing because the Inspectorate not only has contacts with schools of all types, grant-aided, direct-grant, independent and public schools, but also with colleges of further education, colleges of technology, colleges of education, the youth service and adult education. Inspectors work in schools and colleges and have contacts with governors, managers and local education authorities. They are, of course, closely associated with the Department and represent the Department on outside bodies in all areas of the country. Their work is country-wide and they live in the areas where they work. There is probably no other body of people in this country, or perhaps anywhere in the world, which is expected to have first-hand experience of such a wide range of educational activity on a country-wide basis.

The Inspectorate has a substantial measure of independence on educational matters. Inside schools and colleges, an Inspector makes his own personal judgments, and his comments and advice are his own. The advice and information reaching the Secretary of State from the Inspectorate is thus derived from a large number of independent judgments.

The present Inspectorate is smaller in size than it was in the mid 1950s. This is the result of the Inspectorate's own planning and is part of a continuing policy of reorganisation which enables it to relinquish from time to time duties which it no longer needs to perform while continuing to provide the information and advice which are necessary in a rapidly expanding service. The complement for England was reduced from 525 to 495 and this is the present figure. The head of the Inspectorate, the Senior Chief Inspector, is assisted by six Chief Inspectors, one of whom is his deputy, and they share in the general policy and management of the Inspectorate. The Inspectorate is deployed in ten geographical divisions, in each of which is a Divisional Inspector responsible for the working of the divisional team. The remainder of the hierarchy consists of 53 Staff Inspectors responsible for a subject or phase of education, usually across the whole of the country. Of the remaining 425 inspectors, about 300 operate mainly in primary and secondary schools; the remainder are concerned with further education and teacher training or are seconded to other duties.

Day-to-day Work

The normal day-to-day work involves three types of inspection—general, specialist or district. General inspection involves the overall inspection responsibility for a group of schools or colleges. Specialist inspection is concerned with a subject or phase of education and will cover work from nursery specialisation through the whole of the school range of subjects, up to sixth form and on to further education, where will be found specialists in all fields of engineering, building construction, business studies, catering education and textiles—to name but a few. This work will span from professional (degree) level to the training and education of craftsmen and technicians or their equivalent levels in non-technical fields. Lastly, there is district inspection which involves liaison with one or more local education authority. Most inspectors' assignments cover two, and sometimes three, of these types of inspection. For example, a schools inspector may be district inspector for a large county borough or county authority, may himself be general inspector of a number of schools in that area and be assisted by other inspectors who are themselves general inspectors each covering perhaps about 150 schools. He may also act as a specialist inspector over a much wider area. In the further education field a similar pattern exists and the specialist areas are often very large, covering at least one of the ten divisions and sometimes spanning three or more divisions.

Inspectors are recruited through public advertisement. Successful candidates will usually be somewhere between 35 and 45 years of age with a substantial and varied teaching experience. In the case of technical and commercial inspectors, a period of responsible experience in industry or in business is expected in addition to a period of teaching in a technical institution.

How do Inspectors do their job? A substantial proportion of time is spent visiting a variety of institutions, observing the teaching and the learning. Inspectors are expected to form a judgment of what they see and will normally discuss their reactions with the teachers. They are concerned with the inspection of the schools or colleges and not primarily with individual teachers. But overall assessment can only be made by seeing the work done by teachers in the classroom, in the laboratory and workshops.

Until recently, most inspection visits have been of the formal type involving a group of inspectors and have culminated in the traditional type of full inspection report. The visiting party may consist of one inspector for half a day in a very small school to fifteen or so for a week or more in a large technical college with a full-time staff of about 200 plus a large part-time staff. The procedure includes discussions with individual teachers, discussions with heads of departments and the headmaster or principal, a meeting with the governors and, finally, a published report which is sent to the local education authority. These reports are confidential to the particular education authority. Circulation is at its discretion, but where reproduced the report should be published in full. Generally speaking the report is restricted to the authority and the governors and staff of the school. It is the custom and practice of the Inspectorate that nothing in the written report should come as a surprise to the recipients. Any criticisms which are to be made are customarily made first to the teacher concerned. Indeed a number of points which are made with individual teachers are often not discussed with anyone else or only with the head of department. This custom ensures that the most pointed criticisms are made, when they have to be made at all, to the individual concerned who has every opportunity to reply. No one should be surprised by what appears in due course in a written report, although it is inevitable that now and again misunderstandings occur.

But whatever the Inspectorate thinks or says, it can only advise. It has no power to compel and must rely upon persuasion. This is a situation which most inspectors welcome, for it means that their views, which are often based on experience of seeing many teachers at work in differing situations, will only be accepted and followed up if their arguments are good enough to persuade the teachers concerned.

More recently different types of reports have been tried. There is much more visiting of an informal character, involving discussions with teachers and headmasters but no report. This point should be stressed, for some teachers believe that reports of such visits are in fact written and submitted somewhere; this is certainly not the case.

There are today an increasing number of surveys which are quite anonymous in character and in which very often not even individual schools are identified. This type of information is more and more required in connection with planning and development and is a growing feature of HMI's work. But most, if not all, of those who know the work of the Inspectorate would stress that in making surveys and inspecting specialist subjects it is essential that the general balance of work and characteristics of the school should also be observed and commented upon.

First-hand Knowledge

It is sometimes said by both admirers and critics of the Inspectorate that its members would be more useful if they did not in fact inspect. But everything that the Inspectorate does is based upon its first-hand knowledge and experience of what goes on in the actual teaching situation. Without this variety of experience in all sorts and sizes of educational institution the Inspectorate would have no real knowledge upon which to advise anyone. The right to inspect is a great privilege which requires a large amount of tact and understanding. The Inspectorate is

on show and on trial almost every minute of every working day. But this is the core of the Inspector's work and it is difficult to see what contribution the Inspectorate could make if the right to inspect was given up.

What does the Inspectorate do with the knowledge and experience it acquires? First it offers advice and support and sometimes criticism to individual teachers. But with a rapidly increasing and equally rapidly changing teaching force and the static size of the Inspectorate this is not enough. The Inspectorate also mounts on behalf of the Department a substantial number of short courses for teachers during the vacations. A glance through the Department's short course programme, which is run entirely by HMIs assisted by lecturers and tutors from the universities, colleges and schools, gives some idea of the range of work with which the inspector is concerned. In addition individual inspectors are often involved in helping local education authorities and other bodies to run local courses.

District inspectors provide a link between the local authorities and the Department. There will normally be three different district inspectors to each local education authority, one dealing with schools, one with vocational further education, and the other with general further education which will include the youth service, evening institutes, adult education and sport. Before long the two further education functions will be combined so that the whole of that section will be dealt with by one district inspector.

More recently the Inspectorate has been concerned with providing assistance to new bodies like the Schools Council. Not only are seven inspectors seconded full time to work for the Council, one as a Joint Secretary, but many other HMIs provide from time to time information which is either requested by or useful to the Council, and they assist individually with field projects. HM Inspectors, normally staff inspectors, sit as assessors on nearly all the committees of the Council.

Similarly in the further education field inspectors represent the Department on examining bodies, on regional councils, as assessors to the education committees of professional bodies, on committees of the British Standards Institution and, more recently, on the vast number of committees set up by the new industrial Training Boards. Similar arrangements exist in non-vocational further education and in the teacher training world.

The Inspectorate has also provided joint secretaries or assessors to the Central Advisory Councils of the post-war years—Crowther, Newsom, Plowden.

Advising the Department

Within the Department itself are stationed 32 inspectors, mostly chief and staff inspectors. The senior chief and other chief inspectors are in continuous contact with the administrative branches and with HMI working out in the ten divisions. More and more they are concerned with collecting information from the field and supplying it to the Department and other educational bodies with which they are associated. It has in fact often been said in the past that the Inspectorate is the eyes and ears of the Department. A group of inspectors working with a chief inspector is concerned full time with development and external relations. The development work entails contact with educational research

and liaison with the Schools Council. Recently much work has been concerned with the development and use of educational technology. On the external relations side, they assist the Department in meeting and talking to visitors from home or overseas, arranging the programmes of visitors from abroad and dealing with a substantial number of requests for HMI's help overseas. A request for more assistance on educational planning from the Department's Architects & Buildings Branch has led to the building up of a team of inspectors concerned with this work. Altogether out of the reduced total mentioned earlier, eleven inspectors are on a full-time secondment and a varying number of others are away for varying periods of time on outside assignments.

In addition to representation on numerous educational bodies, the Inspectorate also carries out a number of other tasks. It inspects the educational provision for Service families overseas: it also acts in an advisory capacity to the Armed Services, when requested by them, on the provision of education for the Forces, both technical and non-technical. There is also in being a team assigned to visit from time to time schools run by the British Families Education Service in Germany. HMIs represent the Department, as 'assessors', on a vast number of professional committees and also at conferences both at home and abroad. The number of requests by persons and bodies both inside and outside the educational service for the services of HMIs is very great indeed, so great that it is by no means possible to accept all the invitations which are received.

This then is a rough outline of the Inspectorate at the present time. The 'watch-dog' role of the Inspectorate has been disappearing for several years, although the Inspectorate must always remain sufficiently competent and experienced to enter any educational establishment to which it has right of entry and to write a full and critical report which it is prepared to discuss and substantiate with all concerned.

It must also continue to cover the broad range of schools and colleges over the whole of the country. Although individual inspectors can only work in limited educational and geographical situations, teams of HMI can be quickly got together and these can cross the boundaries of nursery, primary, secondary and further education and also the geographical boundaries between local education authorities and the major divisions of the country.

The work of the Inspectorate is becoming increasingly of a consultative type both nationally and locally. It has no power to compel, nor would it wish to have it. The Inspectorate believes that its organisation and way of visiting enables it to advise and assist in the spreading of good ideas and practices. Its root strength lies in its privilege to enter the classroom, laboratory or workshop and to see at first hand the teacher and the taught. Just to be told what is to be taught is no substitute for this—for what really matters is what is learned. The number of formal reports written by the Inspectorate is but a trickle compared to fairly recent times. New roles and practices are taking their place. But the work done by the Inspectorate is dependent upon the good relations and understanding between individual teachers and inspectors, however much we change our procedures and techniques, the need to preserve these personal relations and mutual respect and confidence will always remain.

Careers guidance plus educational guidance plus personal guidance adds up to counselling. A new job for schools?

Counselling In Schools

C. J. GILL

Two university one-year full-time courses were started in October, 1965, at Keele and Reading, to prepare experienced teachers to take counselling responsibilities in secondary schools. The course at Keele is financed by a grant from the Gulbenkian Foundation and in the first year both courses were greatly helped by visiting professors from the United States under the Fulbright Scheme, C. Gilbert Wrenn at Keele and Gilbert Moore at Reading. Although the courses have much in common they differ in emphasis and this paper refers to the one at Keele.

Experience of counselling gained in other countries has to be considered in relation to what counsellors might do in English schools and it might help to put the discussion into an English setting if we look briefly at some of the factors that are creating an interest in counselling here. Among them are the organisation of secondary education into comprehensive schools, the growing concern for children of average and below average ability—especially those from deprived social backgrounds—the decision to raise the school leaving age to sixteen, and the obvious necessity in a country sorely beset by economic worries to use the ability of its people to the full and to ensure a flow of talent and skill to professions, occupations and jobs where they will best contribute to the national need. Educational decisions can be deferred to a later stage in a child's development when selection and allocation to different schools at 11+ is replaced by choice from a range of optional subjects or courses at thirteen or fourteen. Wider educational opportunities also open up vocational possiblities beyond the experience of many parents and they, as well as their children, will need a great deal of information and guidance about school courses, careers and further education if the new opportunities are to be used wisely and valued accordingly. Comprehensive schools will have pupils over the whole range of ability; some of their school leavers will enter universities, some will go into unskilled jobs. Grammar school heads and staffs, with their long experience of higher education, have tried to point the way through the complexities of university entrance and have not always known the opportunities in technical education as well as they might. Technical colleges can now offer courses for potential operatives, skilled craftsmen, technicians and technologists, with the possibilities of transfer from one course to another and entry to degree courses; colleges of education are holding out the possibility of a four-year course to a B.Ed. degree to their more able students. Confusion will become worse confounded unless well informed guidance is available in schools for school leavers seeking the courses in higher or further education best suited to their abilities, choices of career and aspirations.

At a time when redundancy and re-deployment carry threats to the settled existence at home and work of many people, there is no need to labour the point that many industrial processes are undergoing rapid change. Old skills are disappearing and new skills offer new opportunities. Subject teachers and careers staff in schools can scarcely be expected to keep abreast of local and national changes in technology, changes in job skills and in the demand for labour. This is in the sphere of the Youth Employment Officer, with the resources of the Ministry of Labour—through the Central Youth Employment Executive—behind him and his day-to-day contact with industry. The need for teamwork between careers staff (each possibly with his own particular interest or specialism in a range of occupations), and Youth Employment Officers is clear, and was advocated in the Albermarle Working Party Report on the future development of the youth employment service. This subject was well covered in an article by R. D. Salter Davies in *Trends in Education* for October, 1966; the point to be reiterated here is that the Albemarle Report coupled education and careers guidance: 'Education and careers guidance in a school should develop as a team responsibility'. Vocational choice later in life may be influenced and possibly narrowed by early educational decisions on optional courses, say, to drop a science or to take a foreign language, or by low attainment in school subjects such as mathematics. A pupil's vocational aspirations should therefore be taken into account when educational decisions are made that might possibly affect a choice of career later. The tendency is to postpone decisions of this nature and to plan courses that do not shut the door on a range of occupations, but early vocational interests might motivate boys and girls if subject teaching and choice of content and approach touch those interests in a way recognised as relevant by the pupils.

If courses are to be provided 'broadly related to occupational interests' (Newsom Report), or if the vocational impulse is to be 'the core round which the curriculum should be organised' (Brunton Report) for some pupils in the latter part of their secondary school course, discussions on careers will have to be initiated to discover what those interests are, otherwise the new courses will be no more relevant than the old. Would it help to have someone in the school, a counsellor, with whom a boy or girl could talk over their hopes and ambitions and who would not tread on their dreams or abuse their confidence? This might help them to gain in self-understanding; it would certainly be in line with the concept of vocational development as an aspect of personal development.

Choice of Occupations

Donald Super in *The Psychology of Careers** described vocational choice as a process rather than an event. In the process earlier preferences of the child, mainly in the realm of fantasy, are usually replaced by more realistic ones. Faced with a choice of occupation, the young adult has to answer the questions, 'What sort of person am I?' and 'What sort of person do I want to be?' and by reconciling the answers to these two questions, Super suggests, he is relating his self-ideal to reality. 'In choosing an occupation one is in effect choosing a means of implementing a self concept'. If part of the reality to be faced consists of such factors as low ability in the pupil, limited occupations available in a

**The Psychology of Careers:* an introduction to vocational development. By D. E. Super, Harper and Row, New York, 1957.

given area, the local demand for workers, the scale of wages and the nature of the local housing, there is all the more need for guidance to help the boy or girl to find personal satisfaction as far as possible in the chosen job and also in what they make of themselves in the time they are not at work. The prognostic value of IQ at 11+ became suspect in the light of knowledge about individual school careers, and a growing understanding of the significance of interests, attitudes, personal relations and environmental factors became apparent. Longitudinal studies are showing that career patterns have similar determinants. For more than one reason, therefore, there is a trend in schools towards an exploration of career possibilities earlier and extending vocational guidance outside the crisis points when decisions must be taken because the end of school life and the entry to work is imminent. To do this will require a re-examination of priorities, for it will require subject teachers to look outwards as their pupils look to the future and will make demands on all members of staff to extend and deepen their pastoral care. Vocational and educational guidance cannot entirely be separated from personal guidance.

There has been a long tradition of pastoral care in English schools and the appointment of counsellors will in no way remove this responsibility from heads, house masters and mistresses, subject teachers, group tutors, form masters and mistresses; the purpose is not to weaken the total resources of the school in this regard but to strengthen them by appointing men and women whose main area of responsibility is other than subject teaching.

Counselling is a term that has come into common use as various social agencies, voluntary and State provided, increasingly give help to people in some personal difficulty or crisis: marriage guidance counsellors and the Samaritans are examples of voluntary effort; medical social workers and child care officers illustrate State provision. Sometimes people need more information on which to base a decision; frequently they need someone with whom they can talk over their troubles. Carl Rogers, whose book *Client-centred Therapy* has had a far-reaching influence on school counselling in the United States, stresses the potentiality of people to solve their own problems of choice and adjustment if they can work them out in talking with a counsellor. He regards the enhancement of personal growth and social maturity as the purpose of most of the helping agencies, and in his experience has found that the effectiveness of the counselling—be the counsellor a psychotherapist, a social worker, a teacher or a priest—depends on the interpersonal relationship established.

Personal contact in an interview is at the heart of school counsellor's work; it is here that he makes his particular contribution to the guidance provided inside and outside the school. In an interview he may expect to deal with questions on careers, educational courses, and personal matters. Pupils may need help in resolving emotional disturbances which stem from home troubles or difficulties in personal relationships. Under-achievement, for example, might result from wrong placement in school or from unresolved difficulties outside the school. Privacy and confidentiality are essential if boys and girls are to talk frankly about themselves as they seek to increase their self-understanding and gain insight into the situations in which they find themselves. The counsellor will have information available, or will know where they may obtain it or to whom to refer them for help within the school. He will be

concerned with their personal growth and readiness to make decisions, the nature of his advice will depend on the circumstances; some young people need more support than others. He will try to avoid making decisions for them. Empathically he may partially enter their framework of reference and see their point of view; but although he has been their age once he has not been their age in the society in which they live, and he can only genuinely strive to understand; he can help them to make up their minds to a course of action; it is not in his role to make their minds up for them.

In this relationship some recent American experience has suggested that there are disadvantages in the dual role of teacher/counsellor; a counselling relationship is difficult to establish when a boy or girl might meet the counsellor as a teacher responsible for discipline and insistence on performance one day and as a counsellor in a permissive non-judgmental role the next. While it would be foolish to disregard American experience we must admit that for various reasons, including the desperate shortage of teachers, we are not likely to be able to spare enough teachers for full-time counselling in all schools in the near future. Later, possibly in the early 1970s, when teacher supply is easier, a policy decision may have to be made on whether to go on reducing class size or whether to look at staffing in new ways. When this position is reached it would be well to have had experiments on a fairly large scale in the use of counsellors, with careful follow-up and evaluation of their work, so that any decision taken could be based on well tried experience. Students on the Keele course are all experienced teachers seconded on salary by their LEAs to take a one-year full-time course leading to the Diploma in the Advanced Study of Education with special reference to counselling. Last year, fourteen students were admitted; this year the total is seventeen. The first counsellors from the course have been in the schools for only a few months and these are early days in which to make generalisations about their work. Quite independently, the Stoke-on-Trent LEA decided to adopt the policy of appointing counsellors to its secondary schools and we are fortunate in having a group of counsellors with whom we can keep in very close touch.

Liaison

In the schools the counsellor will essentially be concerned with normal boys and girls. Where there is abnormal difficulty specialist agencies outside the school will be involved. Where there is deep emotional disturbance or maladjustment, referral to a child guidance clinic may bring psychiatric help; serious under-achievement may need the help of an educational psychologist. Delinquency may bring the probation officer into the picture. Difficulties caused to a boy or girl by lack of parental care, a breakdown in husband/wife relationship, a death or sudden illness in the home, may be mitigated by help from outside the education service, for example, from child care, marriage guidance or medical social workers. The counsellor will be the obvious person in a school to provide the necessary liaison between the school and other social services and to enlist the help of the appropriate member or members of staff in giving support to a boy or girl at a time of unusual difficulty or distress. Probably he will also have pupils with behavioural or learning difficulties referred to him by other members of staff. But his main concern will be with normal boys and girls whose behaviour

may be reported as satisfactory, and whose progress very fair, yet who may nevertheless have difficulties, fears, hopes and aspirations they would like to talk over with someone prepared to listen, especially at times when they are faced with decisions that may have far-reaching effects on their future lives.

Cumulative records will be of particular value to the counsellor in taking a developmental view of a boy and girl and in helping them to come to terms with themselves and to know their strengths and weaknesses. He may have some general responsibility for these personal records in co-operation with other members of staff. If he wishes to augment the information available about a pupil or a group of pupils he will administer tests, and where even more detailed investigation is advisable he may carry out a case study. Contact with parents will depend upon the delegation of responsibility in a school and the relation between house masters or mistresses, house tutors, careers staff, headmaster and counsellor. The relation between home and school in many instances will be straightforward; where an unusual situation is encountered careful liaison between various members of staff and social workers may be essential and the position of the school welfare officer in this offers interesting possibilities of more effective co-operation.

In some schools the counsellor may help in settling in the new intake of pupils each year; he will almost certainly be involved from the start in educational and vocational counselling, and in ensuring that individual pupils, and their parents, are informed about the educational and vocational choices that are open in such a way as to make thoughtful, realistic decisions possible. Even in schools of say 600–800, a counsellor would be hard-pressed to cover the duties so far described; all members of staff in one way or another will be involved in educational decisions and if there is not a careers staff the counsellor will probably seek to establish one to form a team with the YEOs. How to fuse knowledge and understanding in the minds of several people to secure the best interests of the individual boy or girl poses an interesting question, though precedents are not far to seek. If counselling is widely adopted some greater specialisation in training may be needed as schools become well organized and staffed to provide tutorial care and careers guidance; the need may then arise for someone within the school to whom children with more serious problems could be referred. For such a person to function effectively one year's training might prove too short a period of preparation to give the necessary psychological insights. Such a development lies in the future, though experiments with school based psychologists and social workers might well be tried now.

The Course

At Keele the course includes educational theory, the design of educational investigation, the theory and practice of counselling, educational psychology and educational administration. In psychology the development of normal children is studied, with special reference to adolescents. Attention is paid to the study of individual personality differences and the differential effects of environment. There are lectures on the theory and administration of tests relating to intelligence, personality, interest and aptitudes, and sociometrics. The counsellor-to-be, will be expected to deal with common emotional disturbances found in school and to know when the maladjustment is serious and needs referral. He is prepared for this on the course. The students are also introduced at first

hand to the work of other guidance services such as the child guidance clinic, the school psychology service and the youth employment service. The work of a juvenile court is observed and the students meet a probation officer. Colleges of further education and several industries are visited. Practical work includes case studies, practical administration of tests, role playing, taped and supervised interviews. Even experienced teachers have to learn how to listen and how to keep an interview moving. A course of this nature makes heavy demands on students in lectures, reading and practical work, and the content will be modified as experience is gained and as we learn from the feed-back from counsellors now in schools. In his first year back in school each student has in fact to write a dissertation under the guidance of the course tutors.

Some of them are working out with their headmasters what contribution they can best make in their teaching: careers, work orientation and personal relationships are possibilities. On the course we have still to develop group work more fully, for in this there is opportunity for economy in the use of time and scope for further development in counselling.

From this outline it will be clear that much has to be worked out on the ground. The counsellor will enter into a network of relationships that already exist and will have to establish his own links with the head and staff, many of whom are already giving devoted pastoral care, and also with outside social and referral agencies and with parents. His main contribution will be through the interview which will help pupils to know themselves better, and to see their way ahead, and may help to motivate them in their work in school and to interest them in looking beyond school to adult work and leisure. The counsellor will be concerned with a pupil's total aspirations, not only in work but also in leisure, and will play a part in easing the transition from school to work and to the independence of the young adult.

Knowledge about examinations and tests—what they can and cannot do—has been growing all this century. Teachers today can use them with greater precision and effect

Changing Examinations

NOEL COWEN

The idea that the curriculum came first and should therefore determine the form of any assessment made of it has dominated English official thinking on examination reform for half a century. When the School Certificate was launched in 1918 it seemed self-evident 'that the examination should follow the curriculum and not determine it'. But twenty years later most of the witnesses who appeared before the Spens Committee believed that 'despite all safeguards, the School Certificate examination . . . now dominates the work of the schools, controlling both the framework and the content of the curriculum'. On another twenty years teachers and educational administrators were monotonously reiterating to the Beloe Committee that 'the examination dictated the curriculum and cannot do otherwise; it confines experiment, limits free choice of subject, hampers treatment of subjects, encourages wrong values in the classroom'.

This twenty-year ritual was followed on the last occasion by deliberations which led to the establishment of the Certificate of Secondary Education in 1964. The same year saw the establishment of the Schools Council, which was to think simultaneously about the curriculum and examination. All those who conduct or contribute to CSE examinations, or become involved in the work of the Schools Council, will be beneficiaries of the anxious thought and careful inquiry that have been devoted since World War One to the purposes and techniques of testing and examining: work, for example, like that of Cyril Burt in the twenties in advising London elementary school teachers how to devise and apply intelligence and attainment tests, or of Moray House in Edinburgh which by the thirties was producing a new intelligence test for the use of local authorities every year, or of the National Foundation for Educational Research in the forties developing standardised objective tests as indispensable professional instruments.

Deficiencies in traditional style examinations have been known throughout the present century, though for most of the time the knowledge made little difference to the practice. An English statistician Edgworth reported some considerable divergences between the results of different examiners as early as 1888, and Starch in 1913 showed wide divergences in the marking of English and mathematics. In the early twenties Philip Ballard announced that 'methods old and new are being tried in the fire of experiment and statistical criticism'. But the old methods died hard and in 1935 came the best known demonstration of the unreliability of examiners when the English Commission of the International Institute of Examinations Inquiry reported. The Commission contained three distinguished psychologists, and the report

presented by Sir Philip Hartog and the statistician E. C. Rhodes was a fairly damning document. A single passage, on the marking of School Certificate history scripts, will suffice:

> It was found that when fourteen experienced examiners re-marked independently fifteen scripts which had all received the same moderate mark from the examining authority by which they were furnished, these examiners between them allotted over forty different marks to the several scripts. It was found, further, that when these examiners re-marked once more the same script after intervals of from twelve to nineteen months, they changed their minds as to the verdict of Pass, Fail and Credit in 92 cases out of the total of 210. Clearly a test of this kind cannot inspire confidence.

Yet the system rolled on with the imperturbability of a juggernaut and no doubt also some of its indiscriminate destructiveness. A generation later in the French study *Examens et docimologie*, Pieron reached an almost horrifying conclusion about the reliability of traditional examinations:

> All the experimental data has shown that for a particular performance expressed in terms of an examination script, assessment by different examiners produces marks with considerable variability such that in the determination of these marks the part played by the examiners can be greater than that of the performance of the examinee.*

Examinations are however not only here to stay: they are one of the country's growth industries and the demand for them shows no signs of abating. They are likely to remain an essential part of the education system and, used with skill and discrimination, could as well be instruments as hindrances in the reform of the curriculum and of teaching method, particularly where their use is accompanied by a clear understanding of objectives in operational terms.

What Are They For?

But what in fact are the purposes of examinations? Do they differ from the evaluation which is a constant process by teacher and pupil? It is possible for a member of the ILEA Inspectorate to say, of the process of evaluation, that it should be 'as far as possible and for as long as possible ... an evaluation of the child's work in relation to the child's potentiality'. It would be quite out of the question that a Ministry of Transport examiner should say this about someone taking the driving test: he has a standard to maintain and candidates either have it (in his professional judgment) or they have not. But the criteria of the driving test will not do for a competitive examination, the object of which is to eliminate some of the candidates.

In all of these examples it is the examinee who is being measured: in the first case against his own potential, in the second against a supposedly fixed external standard, in the third against a standard which varies according to how many places there are to fill. But it is not always the examinee who is being measured. When children in public elementary schools were examined by HMIs in the late nineteenth century the object was to measure the efficiency of the school for purposes of grant earning. When, in the fifties of the present century, children were tested who had attended traditional and progressive schools it was the effects of different styles of education that were being assessed. When a teacher tries out a new method of teaching mathematics and wants to know how

*Trs. Roy Cox, *Examinations and Higher Education: a Survey of the Literature*, Society for Research into Higher Education.

well it works it will again be, not the children, but the method which is being checked.

In these three examples different people were acting as examiners: in the first the HMI, in the second the research worker, in the third the teacher. But it need not however be any of these people who does the examining. It may be the pupil himself: indeed this is the basis of programmed learning or the language laboratory. The pupil gives the response he thinks is correct and then looks or listens to check the result. The series of tiny examinations which these processes entail serve to keep the learner on a predetermined course. Larger examinations can have the same effect by defining the area in which study is to take place. They also set standards against which the student can measure his performance and provide a stimulus to the attainment of progressively higher standards. Such examinations, whether little or large, may tend to reward conformism: it is the correct answer, completion of the prescribed syllabus, that gets the prize. To measure originality (if it can be measured) could require a different kind of examination and in consequence a different type of syllabus.

Another range of variants concerns past, present and future: whether, that is, we are examining what has already been achieved, e.g. by way of memorising facts or acquiring skills, or what can now be achieved by way of analysis or judgment, or what is likely to be achieved following a further period of study. Are we, that is measuring attainment (past), ability (present) or potential (future) or some combination of these? *Has* the candidate learnt to calculate accurately in pounds, shillings and pence? *Can* he now pursue a logical line of reasoning on a basis of given data? *Will* he get a good degree because he got good 'A' levels?

Examinations clearly can have many uses for the educator. Perhaps much of the abuse that has been directed at them in the last half century has resulted from a failure adequately to distinguish one purpose from another. This is an argument not for throwing the tool away but for discovering more precisely how best it may be used for the particular purposes we may have in mind. Much of the research into examinations in recent times has been directed to this end, and it is not surprising that in the process the objectives of education itself have been to some extent clarified. The point was well put in an American symposium in 1958 by Ralph W. Tyler, director of the Centre for Advanced Study at Stanford:

> Until we are clear about what we are trying to help students learn, we have no beginning point for evaluation. Each of us needs to answer such questions as what things am I really trying to get students to understand? What kinds of activities and skills in thinking, analysis, problem-solving, and the like am I really trying to develop? What kinds of competence in reading, or writing, or mathematic operations am I actually seeking to help students to acquire? Am I trying to arouse certain intellectual and aesthetic interests, and if so, what are they? Am I trying to develop some study habits or practices that will aid the student in his continuing development and, if so, what are they?

Thus stated the purpose of the evaluation might seem to be as much a test of the effectiveness of the teacher as of anything else.

In the same year experts from fourteen countries on both sides of the iron curtain met at the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg under the chairmanship of Dr W. D. Wall of the NFER. In their report *Evaluation in Education* they called for research on the following lines:

(i) definition of aims, both qualitative and quantitative, of curricula;

(ii) a critical examination of existing methods of evaluation, as much from the point of view of their repercussion on education as of their technical qualities; and

(iii) completion of the network of these methods with a view to enabling judgement of children's progress in every direction of their development.

In particular the report argued for more objectivity in examining, and this has in fact proved to be one of the main lines of development in the last few years. Objective examinations are now firmly established in America and are beginning to be better known in this country. They are described in Philp Vernon's introduction to the subject which was published for the SSEC in 1964 as *Examinations Bulletin No. 4*. The opening sentence makes clear the distinction:

> An objective type test or examination is a form of examination in which every question is set in such a way as to have only one right answer. That is, the opinion of the examiner or marker does not enter in judging whether an answer is good or poor, acceptable or wrong: there is no subjective element involved.

How Valid? How Reliable?

Published at the same time, *Examinations Bulletin No. 3* offered a more general introduction to techniques of examining for teachers likely to become involved in the new CSE. It emphasised that what was to be examined depended on what was the object of the course of study, and then discussed the uses appropriate to essay questions and those appropriate to objective questions. It gave advice on assessing the effectiveness of the examinations: its reliability and its validity. Reliability could be checked by repeating the examination, by having two different examinations on the same material, by comparing scores on half the questions with scores on the other half, or by re-marking the papers on a different occasion. The instrument must also be valid in the sense of measuring what it was thought to be measuring, namely whether the candidate could carry out the range of activities which had been the objectives of the course. The next in the series, *Examinations Bulletin No. 5*, accepting that perfect reliability and perfect validity were unattainable in the present state of knowledge, discussed how school-based CSE examinations could be moderated regionally and given national currency.

With assessment of attainment at about age 16 now divided between two examination systems, the GCE and CSE (the latter also having three modes of examining), judgments on standards of performance are being made by many different people in different parts of the country, perhaps having different ideas about the standards to be expected. The Schools Council *Working Paper No.* 6 (*The* 1965 *CSE Monitoring Experiment*) described a first attempt to develop procedures which will help to co-ordinate examiners' judgements rather than the things being judged—notably in cases where disagreement arises from lack of information about variations in calibre of each board's candidates.

The *Examinations Bulletins* have already made a substantial start, some on individual subjects in the CSE syllabus by reporting an experiment in multiple-choice methods of examining mathematics (No. 2) and a later one (No. 7) exploited the effects of different methods of obtaining responses from a candidate—the traditional method, the multiple-choice method, and the true/false/don't know method. The results

could be viewed in the context of different purposes which examinations might serve, e.g. selection of candidates to fill a limited number of places, giving a qualification to an unlimited number of candidates, or confirming teachers' assessments of their pupils' progress. Other bulletins in the series have reported on experimental examinations in other subjects: technical drawing (No. 6), science (No. 8), home economics (No. 9), music (No. 10), oral English (No. 11), English composition (No. 12), handicraft (No. 13), and geography (No. 14).

The object of the science project was to explore ways of examining science which would reflect and tend to encourage good teaching practice, and one result was to encourage 'schools to look critically at their teaching methods'. Some of the projects produced useful negative results, e.g. the one for home economics where the main conclusion was that a good deal more exploratory work was needed, or the music project which demonstrated that 'an examination of this kind cannot be run satisfactorily on the cheap', or the oral English inquiry which found that most teachers had a good deal of difficulty in assessing oral ability. The English composition bulletin threw light on the possibility of turning the subjective element to advantage, rather than seeking to minimise it, by having three markers working rapidly and judging by general impression and a fourth marker applying penalties for errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and usage.

The distinguishing feature of all these bulletins is that they represent a practical approach to specific problems arising from the current teaching situations in particular subjects: attempts to discover what jobs different examination tools, in the hands of teachers increasingly skilled in their use, can and cannot do. As their influence grows there is good hope that a more empirical and critical attitude to examining will develop at classroom level.

Measuring Creativity

An aspect of the subject of which more may be heard is how far objective tests are useful in measuring ability in the fields of inventiveness, imagination and creativity—as distinct from ability to pull the right answer out of the hat. In their study of *Creativity and Intelligence* (1962) two American researchers, Getzels and Jackson, questioned whether the concept of intelligence as reflected in the intelligence test did justice to other aspects of giftedness. To quote Roy Cox: 'even the most advanced 'objective' tests are heavily weighted against expressions of creativity. The emphasis is all the time on choosing what others have decreed is the right answer. The general impression is that knowledge is tidy and inflexible. A student is asked to converge upon the right answer and not to diverge on a range of possibilities.'

So Getzels and Jackson developed a range of 'creativity tests'. The 'word association test' presents twenty-five words which have multiple meanings and the student is asked to write as many as he can of each. The 'uses test' presents the names of five common objects and asks for as many different uses (unusual as well as common) as possible. The 'hidden shapes test' consists of eighteen simple geometric figures, each of which is followed by four more complex figures: the task is to identify the complex figures in which the simple figure appears, and its performance measures 'ability to disregard superfluous detail in perceptual situations'. In the 'fables test' last lines have to be supplied for a

given story: one moral, one humorous, and one sad. Finally there was the 'make-up problems test' where students were presented with 'four complex paragraphs, each containing many numerical statements about activities such as buying a house, building a swimming pool, and the like'. The task is to use the given information to make up as many mathematical problems as possible—capable of solution but not solved. The authors, admitting that 'no one as yet knows how to educate for creativity', argued that although a certain amount of intelligence is required for creativity they are by no means synonymous and that 'if we wish to foster intellectual inventiveness we may have to risk granting the creative student greater autonomy'.

Open Book Examinations

Other researchers meanwhile have been trying to extend the scope of the essay type examination, for example, by allowing students to take into the examinations room prescribed texts or any books they wish. The main gain, it is argued, is that emphasis is placed on practical problems and reasoning rather than on facts of memory. The conclusion of a study by Kalish (Hawaii, 1958) was that closed book and open book examinations do in fact measure significantly different abilities. If a teacher feels 'that the open book examination is a more valid measure due to the decrease in reliance on memory and detraction from cheating, the open book approach would be the most appropriate. On the other hand, if he feels that the closed book type provided more study motivation and encourages a less superficial approach to a course, he will undoubtedly adhere to the traditional examination. A later study by Feldhusen (Wisconsin 1961), using both essay and objective type tests, was concerned with how college students reacted to open book and closed book methods. There was a clear preference for having textbooks and lecture notes open, e.g. on the ground that it reduced tension. Research on this front is probably still at the stage of demonstrating the obvious. As a tool the open book examination may well have different uses from those of traditional tests but more experiment is needed. There is also the method, said to have been used at Bologna in 1364 and revived by Sir Eric Ashby six hundred years later, of posting questions on a notice board two days before the examination. Ashby's conclusion was that 'the results were very close to our own assessments of the relative merits of the candidates.'

Finally there is the important but difficult question of comparability between the awards of different examination boards. The main object of current comparability studies is to see how far external and internal secondary school examinations lead to grade awards which are of a common currency, despite differences in boards, teachers, pupils, curricula, markers, moderators and school conditions. Such studies will yield information, not only about the comparability of grades between CSE boards, but also about the extent to which their grade one is more or less equivalent to a GCE pass grade (as was found in 1965, the first year of this research). These studies, which incorporate explorations with a variety of methods, are expected to give some useful results, not only about the quality of examination grades, but also about the efficacy of different methods of grade calibration. In addition to the investigations with a scholastic aptitude test, mathematics and English achievement tests, and an essay as calibration devices, work is also going on into cross-marking between boards and into the utility of information derived

from statistics obtained on separate test questions. The latter procedure entails the establishment of a 'bank' of attainment test items from which schools can draw questions most suitable for their examination objectives and can award grades. These studies will yield their greatest value to pupils, teachers, headmasters and examining boards if they are conducted over several years so that changing trends, styles and modes of examining can be studied and drifts in standards (or their absence) observed.

Assessment of human capability always was, and will long remain, a matter both difficult and delicate; and there are perhaps no better words with which to conclude a review of the subject than those used by Burt in introducing the first edition of his *Mental and Scholastic Tests* in 1920: 'Tests, infinitely more scientific than those set out below, can still be but the beginning, never the end, of the examination of the child. To take a young mind as it is, and delicately one by one to sound its notes and stops, to detect the smaller discords and appreciate the subtler harmonies, is more of an art than a science. The scientist may standardise the method; to apply that method and to appraise the results, demands the tact, the experience, the imaginative insight of the teacher born and trained.'

The French too are reorganising their secondary schools. Are there any lessons for us?

Reorganisation in France

HAROLD ROTHERA

Parents, teachers, administrators and politicians in this country currently engaged in the debate about comprehensive schools may find some comfort in the fact that problems of secondary school reorganisation are not peculiar to Britain. In France there is every indication that the government's persistent measures to 'democratise' education have reached a point where controversy will increase now that the structure of secondary education is involved. We in this country may even feel thankful to have resolved or avoided some of the problems now facing Frenchmen, and grateful for the opportunities which their difficulties offer for a further clarification of the aims of secondary education today. It is the future of the CES—the *Collèges d'Enseignement Secondaire* (colleges of secondary education)—which occupies the thoughts of all those at present involved in the reform of education in France. As we shall see later, these *collèges* are basically multilateral schools, designed to provide four-year courses for all children between the ages of 11 and 15 in their catchment areas. At the start of the academic year 1963–64 the first 23 of these schools came into being only three months after the announcement to the National Assembly of their impending creation. This sense of urgency has characterised the subsequent expansion of their numbers. In September 1964, 217 of these *collèges* were in operation; a year later their total had grown to more than 400; by 1967 it is anticipated that 1,200 of these schools will exist and it is the Minister of Education's intention to reach a final figure of some 2,000 CES as soon as possible.

When Monsieur Christian Fouchet, the Minister of Education, on June 20, 1963 first announced to the National Assembly the establishment of this type of school, he emphasised that the concept of 'orientation' of pupils according to ability and aptitude, which has been central to all the educational reforms undertaken by the Fifth Republic since 1959, made their creation essential. By 1963 the policy of orientation had already gone some way, at the 11+ level, towards utilising the talents of pupils who had hitherto lacked the opportunities which their abilities merited. However, a characteristic feature of French education has long been the total separation of the systems of primary and secondary education beyond the age of eleven. Just as in this country before the 1944 Education Act those pupils who failed to get a secondary school place continued their education in the elementary school, so in France the primary school has been the alternative for those who did not go to a secondary school.

Admittedly, by 1963, the French government had widened the base of secondary education. This had been achieved by designating the *cours complémentaires* as Colleges of General Education (CEG) and by considering them for academic, if not administrative, purposes as parts of

the secondary education sector. The *cours complémentaires* had had a long history catering for able pupils in the primary schools and providing within these schools after the age of 11 a four-year course of general education going beyond the compulsory leaving age of 14. The first stage of the French reforms had involved a rejection of the traditional competitive examinations which had selected students for the *cours complémentaires* and for the *lycées*, the grammar-type schools, which have been the only real means of access to the universities and a career in the higher professions. Since 1960 selection for secondary education has been based upon an examination of the pupil's 'dossier', the record of his work in the primary school up to the age of 11. This is only the first step, however, in the orientation process. The parents of a pupil deemed worthy of a secondary education by this method have been able to choose whether the child should go to a *lycée* or to a CEG. In both types of school the pupil's orientation—or guidance—is undertaken.

For the first term the curricula of the *lycée* and the CEG are parallel and at the end of the term parents are advised about the type of secondary course which is suited to their child. If the advice is accepted transfer of the child from one type of secondary school to another may be involved, since it was envisaged at the outset of the reforms that only the *lycées* should continue to provide the longer courses leading the most able students to the university. The secondary school pupil's progress was to be scrutinized, however, by an 'orientation council' of his teachers throughout the 'observation cycle' of the first two years and in theory at least, transfers in both directions between *lycée* and CEG would be easy up to the end of this period, since the CEG course would run parallel to one of the courses—the 'modern' one, which omits Latin —in the *lycée*. A pupil staying on in the CEG beyond the statutory leaving age might well have a last opportunity of getting to the *lycée* at the end of four years. A few pupils would be transferred after the observation cycle to Colleges of Technical Education (CET) designed to produce skilled workmen.

Geographical Limitations

By 1963 Monsieur Fouchet could see the limitations of this system of orientation. The shortcomings of the transfer system which might have been forecast from Britain's experience of secondary grammar and secondary modern schools—the reluctance of CEG staff to lose their best pupils to the *lycée* and the emotions aroused by demotions from *lycée* to CEG—were the least of his worries. Some 45–50 per cent of the 11+ age group still remained in primary schools, with minimal chances of access to secondary education, despite late-transfer classes (the *quatrièmes et troisièmes d'accueil*) set up in some CEG. The broadening of the opportunities for secondary education had geographical limitations. Some children, worthy of a place in a *lycée*, simply did not have a school of this type within travelling distance of their homes. Some areas lacked even a *cours complémentaire* from which a CEG could be developed. Where *lycée* and CEG provision did exist tradition was often keeping able children from the courses best suited to them. Working-class parents, particularly in the rural areas, were suspicious and apprehensive about the *lycées*, whose courses they felt to be both exhausting and inimical to family unity, giving children ambitions and ideas more fitting to the middle and upper classes. Social mobility is not a

universally accepted ideal. Many worthy parents have chosen the CEG in the knowledge that an able pupil could go on from such a school to be trained in an *Ecole Normale* (training college) as a primary school teacher—and remain within his social class.

In these circumstances the anomalies were obvious to a government dedicated to democratising education. In 1962 only 32 per cent of the children of agricultural workers got to any type of secondary school, whereas 94 per cent of the children of the upper classes found their way there, if necessary, as boarders. Paradoxically, too, about one-third of CEG pupils continued their education beyond the basic four or five-year course, whilst two thirds of the *lycée* pupils failed to crown their school careers with success in the *baccalauréat* examination, the university entrance qualification traditionally the very *raison d'être* of the *lycée* course.

The CES, then, were initiated in 1963 to help to overcome some of these limitations and anomalies in the programme of reform. Monsieur Fouchet's aim in 1963 was 'secondary education for all'. The basic problem was that of providing secondary schools throughout France. In the nineteenth century Jules Ferry had set about creating a state system of primary schools with the slogan of a primary school for every child within three kilometres of his home; Monsieur Fouchet's avowed ideal is a secondary school for all within 15 kilometres. The starting point had to be the *carte scolaire*—the map of schools—drawn up on the basis of geography and demography. In the more densely-populated areas already provided with *lycées* and CEG secondary education for all could be achieved progressively by attaching extra classes (to be known as transition classes) to the CEG for those less able pupils who had hitherto been left to complete their education in the primary school. In the 'mixed areas' not so well served by existing secondary schools Monsieur Fouchet saw his 15 km. ideal being achieved by the establishment of the CES, each serving a catchment area of 10,000 people. These schools, with up to 800 pupils, would have *lycée*, CEG and *classes de transition* streams within the same building. In the remoter rural districts catchment areas of 6,000 inhabitants could not provide *lycée* streams of a viable size and here the establishment of CEG of about 400 pupils would have to suffice.

From the outset Monsieur Fouchet and his aides emphasised the advantages of the CES as far as orientation was concerned—transfer from one secondary stream to another being easier within the same building under the supervision of one headmaster. When the Minister announced the 'experiment' of the first 20 of these 'polyvalent' schools in 1963 he spoke with obvious enthusiasm about this 'first serious attempt to make these different types of education really live together'. He has subsequently expressed his surprise that initially people seemed not to realise the significance of these new schools. Possibly, as has been the case with comprehensive schools in this country, people paid little attention as long as these schools were few in number and were serving areas which had hitherto lacked adequate provision of secondary education. By May 1965 however, Monsieur Pompidou, the Prime Minister, had declared that his government was dedicated to as large an expansion of the CES as possible, and in an interview Monsieur Fouchet confidently asserted, 'In two or three years, when France has been covered with these colleges—there will no longer be either CEG, *lycées* or *cours complémentaires* but one single type of establishment in

which all French boys and girls, whatever their social origin and their aspirations, will receive the same education. Socially, it's a revolution. But it was also the only way of achieving real orientation'. By this time parents and teachers anxious to preserve the distinctive features of the *lycée* had already expressed their alarm at the rapidly expanding CES. Occasionally a Ministry of Education spokesman might allay their fears by pointing out that the majority of CES were to be created from existing CEG and that it was not intended to dismantle the *lycées*—reassurances of a type familiar to British ears. In fact, of the 217 CES in 1964, 46 had been created by the addition of CEG and transition classes to existing *lycées*.

Four Year Cycle

There seems every likelihood that, in addition to building new CES, the French government will proceed to further conversions of *lycées* into CES. The decision, taken in 1959, that the school leaving age would be raised to 16 after 1967 has made it possible for the Minister not merely to think in terms of a four-year secondary education for all, but also to implement to some extent the ideal of the *école moyenne*, or common middle school, which has been the dream of French reformers since the Langevin-Wallon proposals for education after the war. In the past the four-year 'first cycle' of secondary education was of significance only to the *lycée* pupil who at the end of those four years chose his programme of study leading to the *baccalauréat* three years later. Once the leaving age is raised to 16 (now unlikely before 1972) every child will be able to complete a four-year 'first cycle' and at the end of that time will be able to choose whether to pursue his education towards a *baccalauréat*, an industrial or commercial qualification involving a two-year course, or a lower qualification involving only an extra year at school, or whether to leave and possibly embark upon an apprenticeship. By the order of August 3, 1963 the principle of orientatation was extended to cover the entire four-year period of the the 'first cycle'. The idea of a common school during this period may appeal to the logical mind of the Frenchman if not to his respect for tradition.

It is clear that in France, as in this country, the actual organisation of the secondary schools in the different areas is going to present differing patterns. Indeed, despite an intensive building programme, it will be several years before secondary education really is available to all. The future structuring of secondary education as a whole is, however, more clearly discernible in France than in Britain. The government's reforms emphasise a two-tier system more than is the case in this country. Where a CES exists as a separate school, pupils will leave it at 15 or 16 to go on possibly to the upper forms of a *lycée* or to a Second Cycle College (*Collège de Second Cycle*) for a shorter vocational course of the type mentioned above. These *collèges* will replace the existing technical schools (the CET). Teachers in the upper forms of the *lycées* are making the predictable comments about the difficulties of inheriting the products of other schools and they fear that even where the CES is created by the expansion of the 'first cycle' classes in their own school, organisational difficulties will hamper their work with the most academically able pupils. By emphasising the two stages of secondary education with orientation at the end of the first four years, the government has, however, forced itself to consider the provision of full-time education

for adolescents not suited to academic work of the type which we associate with the sixth form. The Second Cycle Colleges may prove less than ideal, as many Frenchmen fear, and they would probably be inappropriate within the British system, but their creation emphasises how important it is likely to be for our own schemes of further education to be clarified, expanded and publicised.

Like our first comprehensive schools, some of the first CES have been eager to prove themselves. Realistically, however, the Government is not waiting in its programme of expansion for evidence of success. As is the case with our comprehensive schools, some school staffs feel more committed than others to the new organisation. More seriously, perhaps, at a time when the *lycées* themselves are experiencing difficulty in getting staff adequately qualified academically, it has been difficult to provide the first CES created independently of a *lycée* with well-qualified staff for their *lycée* stream. In fact, when the 217 CES began their academic year 1964–65 they could muster between them only 187 teachers with the degree and teacher's certificate qualifications desirable in a *lycée* teacher. To the onlooker, one apparent handicap to the smooth running of the CES is the stratification of the French teaching profession itself. The French Ministry of Education has always drawn sharp distinctions, both in terms of salary and teaching hours per week, between, in the *lycée*, teachers with the best academic qualification (the *agrégés*), those with degree and teaching certificate qualifications (the *certifiés*) and those who have completed only a part of their academic and professional training (the *mâitres-auxiliaires*). However, a gulf has separated the traditional *lycée* teacher from his counterpart in the CEG or *cours complémentaire*, who himself has been very conscious of his status, having been promoted from the ranks of primary school teachers. Traditionally, from the age of 11 the *lycée* teacher has been educated in a secondary school, separate from the majority of the CEG and primary school teachers, who have been brought up in schools similar to the ones in which they now teach. Now, in the CES, these various types of teacher are required to work together in the task of orientating the 11–15 age group. Currently, the most overt conflict is about the government's insistence that the deputy head teacher of a CES must have had CEG experience. Outside the CES themselves the staff of *lycées* are critical of the poor qualifications of those teaching the *lycée* programmes in the new schools, but increasingly conversions of *lycées* into CES will presumably remedy these objections. Within the CES conflicts and misunderstandings are minimized, however, simply because the multilateral organization enables the different teachers to work quite separately. Experienced CEG teachers tend to be perhaps most aggrieved simply because of the proximity of better-paid, but younger teachers with a *lycée* background.

Hierarchical System

The CES seems to have made little impression upon the Frenchman's hierarchical view of education. The fact that the CES are organised as multilateral schools and not in a comprehensive fashion is explicable in terms of teaching staffs, as much as in terms of subjects studied. It is pointed out that in each year in classes C_1, M_1 (*lycée* type streams) and M_2 (CEG type stream) all pupils study French, mathematics and modern languages to similar syllabuses, thus easing transfer, and that it is only the methodology of the teaching which differs. However, variety

of method is clearly based on the traditional divisions between *lycée* and *cours complémentaire* teachers. A *lycée* teacher is rarely expected to teach the M_2 stream, whatever the method; whilst an M_2 teacher will not frequently find himself teaching the fourth stream in the 'transition classes' (in years 1 and 2) and in the 'practical classes' (in year 3 and 4). The teachers in the different streams even come under the scrutiny of inspectors deriving their authority from different sources.

Subject differences do exist, however, between the streams. Just as in the past, by the beginning of the second term of the first year some pupils have embarked upon Latin in the C_1 class, those in the M_1 stream are studying two modern languages, whilst those in the M_2 stream are almost certainly studying only one modern language and no Latin. The transition classes follow a more limited curriculum. It is suggested that these circumstances make transfer from one stream to another almost as difficult as hitherto transfer between schools has been. Inevitably, staffs of CES often seem to measure the success of their schools by the extent to which transfers are effected, with an emphasis on the 'promotions' from transition classes to M_2 courses and from the M_2 courses into the C_1 and M_1 streams. The danger clearly is that these schools will be dominated by the desire to gear the work in the separate sections to this promotions exercise, which necessarily puts a premium on work of an academic kind. One has the same apprehensions in this country when some head teachers of comprehensive schools give the impression of justifying their institutions solely in terms of the number of pupils successful in the GCE or CSE examinations. Some of the CES report that the socio-economic standing of parents is still a factor in their choice of stream for the child at the outset. The middle and upper classes insist upon a C_1 or M_1 course for their children, the poorer classes still demanding the M_2 course. Some heads have obviously been in two minds as to the proportions of the pupil body which ought to be within each stream. If the four streams are equal in size they feel that the M_2 sections and the transition classes are too small; equally, they feel that the proportions are not correct when they simply reflect the social milieu and the ambitions of parents. The problems of these heads in the matter of selection are greater than have ever existed in our comprehensive schools because within their multilateral organisation they still have to take into account parents' wishes.

In this situation the multilateral organisation is obviously something of an embarrassment and it is not surprising that the supporters of the *tronc commun* point out that organisationally something more is required than simply the housing of three streams under one roof. These critics see the only equitable and viable solution in terms of the *tronc commun*, or common curriculum in the middle school. In this they re-echo the intentions of the Langevin-Wallon commission whose report in 1947 on the reform of education has prompted much thought and action in the entire post-war period. The primary school teachers are loudest in support of the *tronc commun* suggestion which might help to do away with rigid streaming and could lead on to organisation of a comprehensive type. However, this section of the teaching profession in France is least likely to have influence and, indeed, Monsieur Pompidou, in a speech to the National Assembly on May 18, 1965 showed himself firmly opposed to the *tronc commun*, which he believes would hold back the able pupil. The *tronc commun* conjures up for many Frenchman the dismaying prospect of heterogenous unstreamed

classes, all studying the same subject up to the age of 15. There is a growing feeling, however, among CEG staffs, the departmental inspectors responsible for CEG and primary school work and among some CES head teachers that a common curriculum should be adhered to for at least the entire first year, so as to delay the moment of streaming, which inevitably involves subject choices which can be decisive to a child's future. It is suggested, too, that in such a system greater co-operation between the different types of teacher could be achieved by giving them the common experience of teaching, in the first year, the entire ability-range of pupils. A compromise such as this may well be preferred by the *lycée* teachers themselves, who are antipathetic to any suggestion that the country needs to train 'first cycle' teachers who could teach any ability group during the entire four-year course (two years ago public opinion decisively rejected the idea of a two-year, shortened degree course, which might well have produced teachers of this type).

Streaming

There is some danger, perhaps, that we in Britain, conscious of the difficulties facing the CES, may be tempted to assume that issues such as these have never arisen, or have invariably been solved, within our own comprehensive schools. Admittedly, the curricula of the French schools look less enterprising than those of our best comprehensive schools, which have used the increased flexibility given to them by large numbers of staff to include specialists in subjects not normally found in our other schools. At the moment many CES do not measure up to the ideal of 200 pupils in each year, though where schools of 800 do exist, this subject flexibility could exist. However, some of the drawbacks built into the French system are still not wholly absent from some of our comprehensive schools. The *de jure* streaming of the CES is not all that different from the *de facto* streaming in some of our own schools. Organisationally it is *not* easy to implement the comprehensive ideal. The layman's picture of opportunities for the study of any subject by any child and within each subject a thorough-going setting is often unattainable within the exigencies of the time-table and of staff provision. Some modification of the ideal has to be undertaken and it is not uncommon for this modification to result in a streaming which looks very like that of the CES. This state of affairs can arise because of the subject choices, which we, in common with the French and for the same reasons, make for our pupils at 11 or 12. Once it has been decided that some children will take Latin, or chemistry, or French, or algebra perhaps, there can be a temptation to solve the organisational difficulty of the comprehensive ideal by planning in two groups—for those children who take 'academic' subjects and for those who do not, limited setting can then go on within each of those larger groups. But, then, setting of this kind is not unknown in the CES. The French example suggests that we need beware, in such a system, of dividing the staff down the middle as effectively as we have divided the children.

If our 'comprehensive' schools and CES can have these features in common it is because both our nations are anxious not to frustrate the abilities of the young, academically able pupil. Or perhaps it is economic necessity which makes us want to identify and to utilise our best brains as early as possible.

There is a role for schools as social centres of their community. This is particularly true on new estates.

Community School

The way in which we are rebuilding Britain, the creation of more and more massive new communities on the edges of our cities is changing the pattern of life of great numbers of people. Many of these estates tend to be cut off, both physically and socially from the city of which they are a part. They are cultural deserts (writes Martyn Clémans) within which, only very slowly, is the germ of community feeling beginning to grow. One pressing need is for the development of a focus of some kind, to encourage this growth. One way in which this is being done in some areas is to develop schools much more for the whole community.

The motive behind these efforts has perhaps been summed up best by Professor Phillips* 'When the school's role was relatively monolithic in character—teaching children to read, write and compute—little attention was paid to it as an institution influencing values. Today its role has become pluralistic. In one respect its task is clear. It must take responsibility for bringing the child into communication with problems which demand solution through the use of the new social sciences, sciences and arts, and this new dimension demands a new intellectual unity and coherence. But at the same time, new demands are being made on the school at the points of home-school relations, after-school activities, work and leisure, emotional and social counselling. Here there is need for reappraisal so that a haphazard accretion of tasks can be replaced by a planned, conscious assessment of the school's new role'. The Lawrence Weston, a council-built housing estate on the edge of Bristol is five miles from the city centre. It was begun in 1947 to rehouse people from the city slums, of which Bristol once had some classical examples. Geographically it is somewhat cut off. Two tracts of public land, the Durdham and Kings Weston Downs, and an extensive area of largely middle-class housing, lies between it and the city. Entertainment facilities on the estate are non-existent: the nearest swimming bath is a mile and a half away, the nearest cinema three miles away, the nearest theatre, entertainment centre, concert hall in the city centre four miles away. In shape the estate is long and narrow. To the north lie the Avonmouth Marshes, an area mainly given over to industrial use, with some agriculture. To the east is the Blaise Castle property of the National Trust. The estate thus had continuity in one direction only, with Shirehampton, itself a suburb (for want of a better word) of the port of Avonmouth. This estate is almost entirely council owned; there are only a score or so of owner-occupied houses and the socially and financially ambitious have of necessity to move away. About two-thirds of the men living there work in the Avonmouth docks, and the area has the highest income level of any housing estate in Bristol.

**The Role of the School in a Changing Society*, Goldsmiths' College, 1965.

Two schools serve the area (this part of Bristol now has no eleven plus examination): St. Bede's for Roman Catholic children; and Lawrence Weston School of which Cyril Poster has been headmaster since 1959. The school is a co-educational all-through comprehensive holding, at the present time, one thousand children. The central buildings were erected in 1951 as a primary school for the estate. This was enlarged in 1961, a gymnasium and laboratory block being built on one side of it, and workshops on the other. As a result of this conversion there was a certain amount of nominally 'wasted' space in the buildings which the school has now put to good use.

The staff numbers fifty full-time and sixteen part-time teachers, and three secretaries. The school began with a first year intake and the present buildings were first occupied by six hundred children. Successive intakes have built numbers up to their present level, the limit of the school's capacity without further extension.

The first major step towards a community school at Lawrence Weston occurred when the school extensions were at drawing-board stage. As the estate had no branch library, and little prospect of getting one for many years, it was suggested that the school library should be re-sited, enlarged and open to the public. This was done and the school has gained in many ways from the arrangement. A larger stock of books is available to the school than it would otherwise have had, and the library is run by a professional staff, thereby reducing the amount of teacher time spent on library routine, and making more time available for essential library tasks. The building is used exclusively by school work groups during the mornings and is open to the public in the afternoon and evenings. At these latter times, and particularly during school holidays and at weekends, pupils have access as members of the library-using public. Cyril Poster feels that the greatest gain from this arrangement comes in the continuity that is achieved between school and community. 'There were some early misgivings about the presence of adults on the school premises', he said. 'It was felt that they would be a distraction to the pupils, or that the adults would be disinclined to use a library that required them to mix with numbers of young people. From the outset no difficulties were encountered and a free and natural use by young and old was achieved.

Evening Institute

The development of evening activities on school premises has taken different forms in different parts of the country. A great many schools are used for evening institute activities, others serve as youth centres. Many schools have made teacher-youth leader appointments, the amount of time being given over to youth work depending on the needs of the area and the organisation of the school.

At Lawrence Weston School, clubs of various kinds were developed, at first mainly as individual efforts on the part of members of the staff, and later, because the headmaster felt that to some extent teachers see enough of children and children see enough of teachers during the day, outside people, parents and others were encouraged to help in the activities of the school. A printing club began in this way, as did classes in pottery and puppet design. 'But I felt', said Cyril Poster, 'that in a large school, and one within a community with great social needs, overall planning of activities of this kind were essential. Voluntary activity of all kinds can often be wasteful because it is misdirected or, not directed

at all. Also a teacher's day is too full to allow him adequately to prepare for evening activities, his own or other peoples".

For this reason it was decided to appoint an activities organiser, full time to the school. He was to be a vice-principal of the West Bristol Evening Institute, and was to be responsible to the principal for evening classes in the school. He was also to organise all school activities taking place in the evening session. To gain identification with staff and pupils, and also so that some teachers could be released from day-time sessions in return for voluntary work in the evenings, he was to teach in the school. There was, as might be expected, a certain amount of misgiving about this appointment. Many people though it would weaken the voluntary principle on which this kind of activity had been based in the past, as far as the teachers were concerned; but this has not happened.

In the course of his teaching, Gwynne Jones, meets all fifth and sixth formers for 'general studies'. His week in the school is divided—in school all day once a week, free all day another, and in for half the day for the remaining three. He spends each evening in the school until about 9.30 pm. Gwynne Jones feels that as far as evening activities are concerned the school is probably doing no more than many other schools of its size and type. But because there is someone on hand with time and experience to organise what is going on, activities are perhaps better co-ordinated.

There are youth groups run in the school for the lower years, organised by former pupils and upper school pupils, with Mr. Jones' help and guidance, and assisted by students from Redland College of Education, where in the second year all students do some youth work as part of their course. In the middle school there is less demand for general club activities, most pupils preferring to go to an outside youth club, or attending specific activities and the demand that exists is best met by the local youth centre or NABC Club; there is, however, a growing demand for specific activities—hobbies, clubs or evening institute classes. The sixth form has converted two former store rooms into a club, which they can use both during the day and in the evenings. Club Six, as it is called—where the clock is stopped permanently at a minute past school-out time—is a riot of green painted piping and the walls are awash with bullfight, travel and cinema posters. Sixth formers can make coffee in the clubroom, work, or just talk.

But one purpose of Jones' appointment was to stimulate the cultural need of the community through evening institute classes. Sixteen such classes are run in the school, ranging from pottery making to 'getting married'. Members of the staff take many of them, supported by a local doctor (first aid) and a police sergeant (better driving). Average membership of the classes is about twenty, but there is a waiting list for some, for instance, speedwriting and woodwork. During the evening period the school is used for other less formal activities in which anyone living in the area can join. There is a discussion group that meets in the housecraft flat; a TV study group in a converted locker room (part of the once 'wasted' space); sports clubs have workouts in the gym and pop groups in some suitably remote room. The number of people taking part in all these activities has more than doubled in three years.

Even so it is felt that contact between the school and the estate could be better than it is, and the work of the school better understood. That a great deal of effort is needed to achieve anything is shown by the fact

that when Gwynne Jones took up his appointment six thousand questionnaries were sent out asking people on the estate what needs they thought the school might provide for. Only three replies were received!

Community Council

In the hope of improving contact, and reducing the amount of overlap between one social agency and another, a community council is being set up which will meet in the school. It will be made up of representatives of all organisations on the estate concerned with social welfare in the broadest possible sense, and the aim will be to secure better co-operation between them by means of planned effort and, for some ventures, pooled resources. This will add strength to these organisations which already exist and will no doubt reveal many hidden needs.

Married women, with children of pre-school age, are one group in the community that tends to become very isolated. The headmaster would like to set up an afternoon creche, professionally staffed but assisted by girls of the school as part of their home economics course. The mothers would then be free to attend further education classes and courses which could be set up in the school—for instance in shorthand and typing, cookery, art and crafts, woodwork physical education and perhaps more academic pursuits.

The other pressing need in the headmaster's view, is to have a short stay children's home for about ten children attached to the school, perhaps with a member of staff and his wife as house father and mother. The incidence of temporary family breakdown is high on the estate and, in spite of an excellent network of welfare services provided by the city, situations deteriorate through delay. Most important, any provision for children in families where there is sudden or serious illness, desertion or mental breakdown, frequently means moving the child to another locality and another school. He becomes cut off from the friends he has, the locality he knows and the place which could best cherish him.

Field Centre

It was in an effort to fulfil community social needs of another kind that the school took a three year lease on a farmhouse, Sperry Barton, in the Exmoor region of West Somerset, in February 1966. Sperry Barton has a large kitchen, two living rooms, four bedrooms, a bathroom, separate outside lavatory and an assortment of store rooms. As well as providing for social needs, the centre will act as a base for geographical, historical and biological field studies.

Lawrence Weston is not by any means the first school in Britain to acquire a field centre of this kind. Braehead School in Scotland has one, Kirkby Ruffwood in Liverpool has a redundant railway station, and there are a number of others both run by individual schools and by local education authorities for use by all schools in their areas.

Kitchen space at Sperry Barton limits the size of parties using the house to twenty children and two adults, but during 1966 the centre was used by two hundred children in fourteen parties, each spending between three and four nights there. Visits were of two kinds: at weekends mixed ability groups of children of the same age visited the centre for what amounted to a holiday. During the week working groups, mainly school leavers and remedial classes, used the house.

When a meeting was held to discuss ways in which the working of the field centre might be improved during its second year, the feeling of the staff was that sending the children there in sets rather than mixed ability groups would interfere less with other school work. There was also a view that periods spent at the centre should be longer, seven days at least. Because the centre had no permamnent warden, one science master, Martin Kamm, spent the last part of the summer term there, his place in the school being taken by a newly qualified graduate on a supply basis. 'You see a different side to a child once you get him away from his usual environment', he said. 'Surprisingly, many children of exemplary behaviour in school were more difficult at Sperry, some difficult children were much easier to handle'.

There is no doubt that you learn by doing. The school has learned a good deal about how (and how not) to run a field centre. They have found a great deal of planning is needed for successful field work; they have found twenty children to two adults is not a close enough ratio to cope with the unforeseen; they have found it essential that teachers taking parties there should know the local lore and law (you aren't allowed to swim in the Clatworthy reservoir); they have found that you have to decide the relative value, educationally, of visits to the centre—for certain groups and sets, time spent there must be set against time missed from classes. This has to be taken into account when planning visits, and for some children social gains have to be set against educational losses.

In spite of all the problems, the staff is firmly convinced of the value of what is being done at the centre. 'I agree with the Newson Report here', one said, 'residential experience does have beneficial effects on the personal and social development of many children. But I don't think this is necessarily confined to the lower ability range, it can stimulate even the brightest child. It can, in the words of the Report, help them all to find new zest in everything they do'.

This zest is acquired, in part by example. It is because the headmaster and staff believe wholeheartedly in what they are doing that Lawrence Weston is developing towards a community school. Attitudes are vital here. School-community links will not survive the kind of traditional thinking on the part of headmaster, caretaker or staff that the school 'belongs' to them. In a sense they abrogate their property rights in such a venture.

Lawrence Weston is by no means the only school which has developed links with the community it serves, of the kind described in this article. More and more schools are reaching out in this way, and are at different points on the same road.

As higher education expands
can culture be left
to take care of itself?

Higher Education and Culture

DAVID HOPKINSON

That there is a connection between learning and economic progress is readily understood to-day even in the least sophisticated societies. But learning has something to do with taste and behaviour as well as with skills and useful arts. In any society it can be shown to exert an influence on the opinions that people form and the distinctive qualities of the life that people live, to denote which the word 'culture' will be employed in this article.

If for economic reasons a particular society presses forward an advanced educational programme, cultural side-effects will follow. Can these be planned and controlled? If so, is this end achievable by means of the educational programme itself, or must there be some parallel development specifically related to cultural objectives? Do we by cultivating good vegetables become good gardeners or should we also grow flowers? On the assumption that these are important social questions, where should we look for guidance in attempting to answer them?

There is clearly much to be learned from our own educational experience, but in smaller European states such as Denmark, with its historic folk high schools, or Sweden with its recent comprehensive school reform, there is evidence of conscious effort to mould a national pattern of life. The school system has an obvious bearing on the formation of a culture, but it may be particularly relevant for our purposes to look at the provision of 'after school' or 'adult' or 'higher' education. Thus in Denmark significance attaches to the ideas of Grundtvig in the first half of the nineteenth century. These lead to the establishment of institutions of adolescent and adult learning which have exerted an influence on Danish, and indeed on Scandinavian, social and political life for over a century. The earliest folk high schools rejected examinations and conventional curricula. Their avowed intention was to develop a taste for order and quality, for freedom, comradeship and love of country. They grew in accordance with what the people themselves wanted, and they were open to all. The folk high school movement produced its own great teachers such as Kold and Schroder. At the same time England was even more productive of those great, self-appointed teachers independent of the official teaching agencies of the country. Carlyle, Mill, Newman, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold did relatively little teaching on regular engagements in institutions of higher learning. Their messages and their lessons were in the main delivered direct to the adult and literate public through pamphlets, books, published lectures and contributions to serious periodicals. Towards the end of the century adult learning became more systematised. The state and the established universities began to provide both on an institutional basis and through activities 'outside the walls'.

H. G. Wells in the year of his centenary could be cited as a product of the first development. His education at the Normal School of Science,

South Kensington is well documented in *Experiment in Autobiography*. That institution had been set up by the government, with T. H. Huxley as its Dean, to produce teachers of science. Wells, having won a place, (and a maintenance grant of one guinea a week) attended the school, feeling that if he did what he was told and followed the regulations, then he would be 'used to the best advantage for the world and for myself'. He soon found out that the Normal School of Science had not only no idea of what it meant to do with him, but 'like most other things in the sliding, slipping civilisation of the time, was quite unaware of what it meant to do with itself'. Wells found that an institution designed to achieve an output of what he called 'mechanical, electrical and chemical business smarties', achieved in spite of itself 'a great deal of real University work and made men of many of its technicians'.

The cultural influence of the second development—university extramural work—is clearly shown by Miss Vera Brittain, who in *Testament of Youth* described the manner in which it helped to liberate her from what she called 'provincial young-ladyhood' as she experienced it in North Staffordshire just before the First World War. Her liberation came from attending Mr. (later Sir John) Marriott's 1913 course of Oxford University Extension Lectures on Problems of Wealth and Poverty. This began as a polite social occasion in the Town Hall, Buxton, but Miss Brittain did her written work for Mr. Marriott, was accepted for the Oxford Extension Summer School and eventually, self-taught, won an exhibition to Somerville. 'But so unpopular', she writes, 'at that time was the blue-stocking tradition and so fathomless the depth of provincial self-satisfaction, that my decision to go to an English town to study the literature of my own language caused me to be labelled "ridiculous", "eccentric" and "a strong-minded woman". . . . "How can you send your daughter to college, Mrs Brittain!" moaned one lugubrious lady. "Don't you want her ever to get *married*".' These then are two examples of the manner in which access to higher learning promotes conflict and leads to cultural change. Enterprises and developments in education which may be organised in order to achieve precise and defined objectives, such as an increase of qualified engineers or science teachers or women graduates, tend to influence society in many other indirect or long-term ways.

Another means of throwing light on these effects would be by examination of the origins of the English Universities of to-day. They fall into five groups. First the old religious foundations which need no description. Second the Benthamite or Civic institutions beginning with London. Third the 'Extension' universities, such as Reading, or in more recent times, Keele. Fourth the 'new' universities of the 1960s. Fifth the technological universities, formerly Colleges of Advanced Technology. All of these institutions provide higher or tertiary education, either end-on to secondary education or after a break in which students are engaged in some kind of productive work or employment. Although only the fifth group contains a substantial proportion of students who have had, or are concurrently obtaining, experience of this kind, it should be noted that all universities draw some undergraduates from this category and that many post-graduates will have worked in industry or as teachers or in other occupations.

Self-conscious Élite

In Britain, as in the USSR there are two different systems of student recruitment and this seems to have important cultural implications,

which are much discussed. End-on tertiary education has tended, because it has been so highly selective, to promote a self-conscious élite within society. Its members may become complacent, mercenary and status-seeking or so highly specialised in their learning that they lack the power to communicate with, or even to understand and live with, their fellow citizens. It is interestingly clear that they are marrying within the élite to which they have attained.

Those who enter higher education not from school but from work may be students from those sectors of industry and the public services which choose to invest in the education of their labour force, or individuals advancing their own education out of a conviction of its value. Members of these groups are less likely to be self-satisfied though they may have a narrower conception of university life and purpose. They tend more readily to identify themselves, or at least to sympathise, with the dispossessed or under-privileged. They are perhaps more likely to experience a sense of cultural or class emancipation which may arouse great enthusiasm or great anxiety. Fewer will have graduate wives or graduate husbands.

It can hardly be doubted that the cultural influence of all institutions which undertake work of university standard will be great, but it may be that some, aiming at a rapid expansion and heavily committed to teaching and research in particular fields, will be less clear-sighted than others about its nature. There are three ways in which the DES has attempted to guide development—first by the direct grant it makes to university extra-mural departments and to residential colleges for adult education such as Ruskin and Coleg Harlech—secondly by the provision of mature state scholarships tenable at universities and of post-graduate scholarships in arts subjects—thirdly by an effort to broaden the character of courses leading to degrees and diplomas in applied science, technology and business and management studies. Provision for the general education of students reading for these awards is generally a condition of the recognition of the courses themselves. The Department's influence has been exerted to ensure that those seeking to obtain higher education by full-time or part-time study should have reasonable access to the means of doing so and that higher education itself should consist of something more than the instruction necessary for acquiring a limited technical or professional expertise.

It remains vital that the universities as well as the further education colleges should take their learning outside the walls whenever there is a genuine demand for it. This is done by providing courses for individuals and expert services to corporate groups. The importance to higher education of research and consultancy 'outside the walls' needs no emphasis, but it is perhaps worth drawing attention to the reasons advanced by Sir Walter Moberley in his *Crisis in the Universities* (1949) to support a plea for the whole-hearted attention of universities to extra-mural work—that it was socially important, that it was often work of high quality, stretching and enlarging the minds of teachers as well as of students, finally that University participation in it set standards of scholarship and unbiased treatment of controversial subjects, otherwise unattainable.

One of the uniquely important things about the way English adult education has developed is that it has brought the universities into operational partnerships, first with adult voluntary organisations, such as local university extension committees and the Workers' Educational

Association, then with the Board of Education and its successors, finally with local education authorities, trade unions and employers. All English universities grouped in the first three of our categories are engaged in adult education in this manner to-day. Each has an extra-mural department responsible for the conduct of the work and for the relationships with the Department of Education and Science and the other partners. One 'new' university has indicated its intention of developing in the same way; others together with the technological universities are more likely to explore new ways of contributing to the education of non-matriculated adult students. As they do so it would seem certain that local education authorities must be involved—the 1944 Act endows them with that responsibility—but at present there seems a perhaps regrettable absence of organic relationship with the DES.

More Technologists

In the last twenty years society has made increasing demands on institutions of higher learning. One of the main demands has been for an increased output of scientists and mathematicians, engineers, economists and social scientists, thus infiltrating into the community more expert technologists, consultants, research workers, designers, administrators, doctors, teachers and social workers. It is generally recognised that the achievement of this objective depends both on those institutions of higher learning which provide courses end-on to secondary education and those which also take students following a break or on a sandwich basis. While responding vigorously to these demands on an ever-increasing scale, the FE colleges and colleges of education have succeeded in broadening their curricula and much of their teaching. At the same time the older universities have not contracted, indeed in most cases they have expanded, their provision for the 'liberal' or 'cultural' academic education of adults. There are remarkable achievements in a period of such stress.

The two factors that seem to account for the continuing concern of the universities with extra-mural work are first the separate course of its finance—grant-aid from the DES to cover 75 per cent of its teaching costs—and secondly, the earnest and indeed enthusiastic conviction that this work was proper and honourable to all universities that inherited the great tradition of free learning and sought to transmit it. One archbishop, more than one cabinet minister, many vice-chancellors and a host of teachers have associated themselves in the last thirty years with this aim and purpose and asserted the claims of liberal adult education on the state's resources, but by far the most extraordinary and indeed classic expression of it is the letter that Sir Winston Churchill wrote in 1953, to the General Secretary of the TUC.

'There is, perhaps, no branch of our vast educational system which should more attract within its particular sphere the aid and encouragement of the State than adult education. How many must there be in Britain, after the disturbance of two destructive wars, who thirst in later life to learn about the humanities, the history of their country, the philosophies of the human race, and the arts and letters which sustain and are borne forward by the ever-conquering English language? This ranks in my opinion far above science and technical instruction, which are well sustained and not without their rewards in our present system. The mental and moral outlook of free men studying the past

with free minds in order to discern the future demands the highest measures which our hard pressed finances can sustain. I have no doubt myself that a man or woman earnestly seeking in grown-up life to be guided to wide and suggestive knowledge in its largest and most uplifted sphere will make the best of all pupils in this age of clatter and buzz, of gape and gloat. The appetite of adults to be shown the foundations and processes of thought will never be denied by a British Administration cherishing the continuity of our Island life.'

The words are peculiarly Churchill's own and by 1967 they may seem to many rather odd and out-of-date, not with-it, as we would perhaps now say. But they assert two propositions with unsurpassed authority —that higher education has to do with culture as well as with skill, with mental and moral outlook as well as with professional competence, with matters like the continuity of national life, or indeed the revolutionary reconstruction of national life, and that the oldest he (or she) in England has as much right to it as the young man or woman with the appropriate certificates and on the threshold of a career.

Plan for Polytechnics

Churchill, the TUC, the Ashby Committee, which reported in 1954, and the Robbins Committee were all in agreement about the significance of university extra-mural work and although restricted by financial considerations this work has continued to grow; but not of course at anything approaching the rate of growth in institutional higher education. Since the war the number of universities has in effect doubled and in the next few years perhaps about thirty polytechnics will be formed by amalgamation and internal reconstruction. The White Paper *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges* (Cmnd. 3006) lists amongst reasons for this development the needs of two types of student 'no less important than those who have the time and ability to take full-time or sandwich courses of degree standard'. They are those who require a course of higher education below degree standard and those who, being already in employment, can engage only in part-time study. (One may think of today's counterparts to the young H. G. Wells and the young Vera Brittain.)

Few would doubt that it is sound national policy to draw attention to the needs of these students and to plan for their satisfaction. Many are of course attending regional, area and local colleges, generally with precise vocational objectives, but over 60,000 at least are enrolled each year in exacting extra-mural classes which, with relatively few exceptions, offer them no targets in the shape of diplomas or certificates. Why do people in such numbers come to these classes, studying subjects over the whole range of the arts, the humanities, the social and the natural sciences? What can be learned for the future development of higher education from the university's extra-mural experience and from the work done in the arts and social sciences within the syllabus of courses in technology and science?

First, I would suggest, that mature students are interested in the society to which they belong and its changing culture. From institutional further education evidence for this assertion can be drawn from various researches on student attitudes to 'liberal studies' carried out in several colleges. In extra-mural adult education, history, political science and international affairs formed the staple diet from the 1900s

to the 1930s. In the post-war era the arts and social sciences have been predominant.

Secondly, that the students themselves should be associated with and consulted about the organisation and the content of their studies, that the widest possible range of choice should be offered them and personal responsibility for making choices should be cultivated.

Thirdly, that teaching should be entrusted not simply to specialists with high qualifications but expecially to those who have given some thought to, and consequently possess some understanding of, adult educational motives and learning processes.

Fourthly that tutorial and seminar methods should be used in such a way that the experience and judgment of the mature student are brought to bear on the topics studied.

Lastly that a study in some depth involving written dissertation or thesis on some limited topic is of great importance.

It seems likely that university expansion will have the effect of enlarging and intensifying the same kind of cultural influence that the older universities have exerted. The *idea* of a university, that which animates its teachers and administrators, is not undergoing radical change even though the shape, structure and academic organisation of new universities may be different. The technological universities, busily setting up faculties of social science, including education and the polytechnics with departments of liberal studies, social studies, management studies, even of arts and humanities, are directly as well as indirectly engaged in the cultural revolution. It is of great significance that this should be their policy and notable that their outlook on the teaching of the humanities, the social sciences and management studies should in the main be based on the principles broadly outlined above. These principles derive from the English tradition of university adult education. There have been some heartening exchanges of view between those teaching these subjects in extra-mural departments and those teaching in the new technological universities and in colleges of technology. Many posts in these universities and colleges have been filled by men with experience of work in adult education.

What has been tried and tested not only in universities of all kinds, including those primarily concerned with technology also on the further education system will no doubt be carefully studied by those responsible for the development of the polytechnics. The White Paper has outlined a plan for 'developing a distinctive sector of higher education' by other than university provision. It has emphasised that the work of polytechnics should be comprehensive in range and character, designed to meet the needs of all students whether full-time or part-time, qualified to proceed to degrees, or unqualified. They are to be what those universities heavily committed to adult education activities have long sought to be, 'communities of full-time and part-time teachers and students'. Such aims are easy to state and hard to achieve. But only when they are stated and then pursued is the higher educational system directing itself with conscious intention towards cultural goals.

Organising the curriculum for a modern secondary school is a task of some complexity.

Finding the Time

A. G. GOOCH

The organisation of secondary education in this country has never before been the subject of such widespread and enthusiastic attention as it is today. The universal problem is to provide the basic characteristics of the comprehensive school in the available accommodation, modified as and when national finance will permit, and with the existing teaching body expanded within the limitations of the planned teacher-training programme. It is only when alternative proposals for a particular area have to be examined in detail that it begins to be obvious how very many variable factors are involved and the extent of our ignorance of their relative significance. Most of these factors are, at best, capable of only extremely limited objective assessement, and their elucidation is bound to be a slow business producing results which are far from precise. Any reorganisation scheme is likely to come into use by a series of successive stages, and second thoughts based on local experience of the early stages will be possible. But such second thoughts are likely to be expensive financially and, more significantly, in terms of possible undersirable effects on several age-groups of children who may be the subjects of a scheme of reorganisation which is later rejected.

There is a field of enquiry which is more important and which, with the immense interest in overall organisation, is not receiving the attention it requires. This is the range of problems associated with the structure of the secondary curriculum in the individual school, in relation to the various possible objectives. Some important work is in progress, but nothing like as much as is needed, and often the cart may be said to be placed very firmly in front of the horse. No one would think of preparing the components of a bridge or other complex structure in advance of discussion of the design of the whole project and preparation at least of outline plans, yet such a procedure seems to be accepted in the field of secondary education. The situation has presumably arisen because interest in the developing curriculum naturally first becomes significant at subject-teacher level, and major projects in English, modern languages, mathematics and science are now in progress. The dangers of the position are best considered by exploring one such project in some detail.

The Nuffield Foundation Science Teaching project developed primarily from discussions within the Association for Science Teaching from the end of the last decade onwards. A considerable number of schools are concerned with the investigations and schemes so far completed or in progress, and the results are being incorporated in textbooks, teachers' guides, etc. which are now being published. Some indication of the size of the undertaking can be gathered from the fact that the material already published about the first three years of the proposed courses runs to more than 3,200 printed pages. The complete schemes are designed to

cover five-year courses in chemistry, physics and biology, and examinations based on them in the individual science subjects have already been approved for use at Ordinary level in connection with the General Certificate of Education. The *Introduction and Guide* to the Chemistry course makes the following statement in the preface:

> 'The work outlined is intended for children of average and above ability in the 11-16 year age group. Most of these children will not continue to study science after the age of sixteen. For them the course must be a pertinent, satisfying, and enlightening part of school experience, and must obviously be rounded-off and complete within itself. There are also those whose interests will take them on into industrial chemistry, metallurgy, engineering, or further academic study. For this important minority, the course must also serve as an adequate basis for future work—whatever its nature. In developing the proposals, the varying needs of both groups have been kept in mind'.

Basically similar, though not identical, statements occur in connection with the courses in physics and biology. In other words, the sponsors are recommending the complete scheme as appropriate for any individual pupil in the upper half of the ability range from eleven to sixteen. What do the proposals involve in terms of curriculum time? The subject sections vary in the clarity with which this is stated, but one can only conclude that six, six, nine, nine and nine periods, each of 40 minutes' duration, are regarded as necessary each week in the successive years. With periods of this length it is most unlikely that the weekly total available for all teaching purposes, including physical education, will exceed 35. How far can such a subject allocation be regarded as justifiable in relation to the proper requirements of other fields of study within a system of general education? If the scheme, in spite of the quoted objective, is to be limited to only a proportion of the pupils, how should such children be selected? When general practice is moving steadily towards the concept of a preliminary common curriculum covering the first three years of the secondary school, what is the justification for changing the time allocation for science at the end of the second year? These are some of the questions which should surely have been carefully considered before detailed subject proposals were prepared. As the proposals stand they undoubtedly command the sympathy and interest of a great majority of head teachers and other interested people, yet few will feel that they can assign so much time to science within the concept of a general education for the ordinary child. This conflict of ideas will lead some to mutilate the schemes, in order to reduce the time requirements and others to abandon them altogether without serious consideration. Either of these actions would be most undersirable, and we must hope for properly coordinated and detailed guidance to be made available before it is too late.

The Head's Problems

There follows a selection—by no means complete—of problems which confront any head teacher involved in the production of a curriculum for a secondary school:

> What is the most appropriate length for a lesson period, based on educational rather than organisational requirements?
>
> Does this vary from subject to subject, and, if so, how far can such variations be accommodated within a timetable?
>
> How far are teaching groups involving the whole range of ability (a) desirable, and (b) practicable, at the age of eleven?

Do the difficulties in providing such groups increase with older age groups?

Is it possible to find a reasonable compromise between groups which include the whole ability range and those which are finely graded? How far does 'setting' offer such a compromise, and what are its limitations?

At what stage is differentiation within the curriculum between pupil and pupil desirable or practicable?

What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of the various organisational devices at present used to provide such differentiation?

Are there other practicable methods not yet widely known or practiced?

At what stage is 'specialisation', as opposed to 'differentiation' within the secondary curriculum (a) educationally desirable, (b) at present a consequence of higher education entry requirements which is difficult to avoid?

How strong is the case for devoting some part of the curriculum time to non-examination work even in the fifth year, and for including work which is outside any planned syllabus?

How far is it considered essential to offer a 'balanced' curriculum throughout the whole secondary school life?

What is the place of private study and of homework at the various stages of the course?

If a distribution of teaching time between what may loosely be called academic and non-academic subjects can be agreed for the abler pupils how far can that distribution be retained for the less able children by the adoption of modified techniques of teaching?

It is surely extremely important that every head teacher should have available the factual and statistical evidence on these and similar matters, together with some assessement of such material based on individual experience, particularly at a time when only a minority of head teachers have had practical contact with many of the wide range of problems with which many are now, for the first time, faced. It will never be possible completely to equate the problems of any one school with any other, but there are many matters on which errors can be avoided, or at least limited in significance, by pooling the results of experience, and this can only efficiently be arranged by centralised action. If such action is practicable and important in the field of the individual subject is it not potentially even more valuable in relation to the problems of the curriculum as a whole?

Some Interim Conclusions

It is tempting to discuss, within the limits of the author's personal experience, the evidence on some of the problems listed in the previous section, but the evidence on a single one of these topics could not be adequately covered, even in outline, within the scope of a single article. It is proposed, therefore, to state categorically, and without evidence, certain interim conclusions to which a head teacher might possibly come, and then to discuss briefly their implications for the job of building a curriculum and a timetable. The scene is assumed to be limited to the age-range 11-16 and to be directed primarily towards the upper half of the ability range, whilst the whole enormously important field of social organisation must, deplorably, be excluded at the moment. Here, then, are some 'interim conclusions':

In view of the extensive use of specialist teaching rooms and the

present size of secondary schools the minimum nominal length of a teaching period is 40 minutes.

Unless there is some general increase in the length of the school day, this involves a teaching day of no more than 7 periods.

With 35 timetable units differentiation between subject allocations and the introduction of a full range of studies are difficult to achieve, but the disadvantages of six, seven or ten day cycles for the timetable in relation to use of part-time teachers and to cooperation with other schools outweigh their possible advantages.

The case for a much wider ability range within the teaching unit is a strong one, but with present day staffing ratios and the lack of experience or training in the use of techniques suitable for such units there is a grave danger of serious loss of efficiency if arrangements are introduced too rapidly or rigidly.

The last decade has shown that, given the right methods of presentation and suitable incentives, children of comparatively low ability can reach a much higher degree of intellectual development than had previously been conceded. It is in this field that we can hope for the greatest progress.

The first aim of the secondary course between the ages of eleven and sixteen should be to offer a balanced education for all. If higher education courses cannot adequately be covered in the times at present allotted to them the remedy should surely be to extend them to lengths more comparable with those in other educational systems, rather than to resort to any distortion of the concept of general education as the main objective of the first five years of secondary education. This is not intended in any way to rule out the inclusion of applied studies within the secondary field provided that they can properly be regarded as within the concept of general education.

A balanced education for all does not mean an identical education for all. Many people consider that the advantages of a common curriculum from 11 until 14 greatly outweigh the disadvantages. Beyond this stage, however, the popular concept is of a basic course in certain subjects which are regarded as essential to general education, together with a system of 'controlled options' and, if possible, facilities for private study and for project work.

The expression 'controlled options' is intended to indicate a system whereby the individual suggests his or her own wishes, and is advised on these in relation to what is known about previous achievement, potential fields of further education, employment, etc.

Against this background of ideas pupils might, on admission, be placed, on the basis of available information and recommendations, in three groups corresponding to lower, average and higher ability ranges. With a small comprehensive intake such groups might contain no more than 60 children, in which case they would each operate as two teaching units of equal ability range. With larger intakes there might well be three, or even four parallel teaching units in each group.

A common timetable could be devised to cover the first three years of the course, based on some such time distribution weekly as:

English/religious education/history/geography	12 periods
Mathematics	5 »
Science	4 »
Foreign language	5 »
Art/music/handicrafts/home economics	6 »
Physical education	3 »

Among specialist teachers such an arrangement might well be least acceptable to classicists, scientists and physical education staff, but it contains nothing which is not fairly widely found in the schools at present. It is important to limit the number of teachers with whom the young pupil must deal. If, for example, it is considered necessary to provide separate specialist teachers of physics, chemistry and biology it will be a considerable advantage if the total science time can be programmed at this stage in such a manner that the whole weekly allocation can be with one teacher in a single science, and the teaching can be rotated on a terminal basis. A similar arrangement may be worth considering for the aesthetic and practical subjects. With the preference for comparatively longer lessons in this field the teacher will normally see the pupil only once a week, and a terminal rotation could provide an allotment of three double-period lessons in a particular subject for one term in each year.

At the age of fourteen some differentiation of curriculum between pupils is generally regarded as important, and it is at this stage that the problem becomes much more difficult to solve. Suppose a common-core course for all, including English religious education, mathematics, science, a modern language, a practical or aesthetic subject and physical education is decided on with, in addition, a limited range of optional subjects. An allotment of English four periods, religious education one period, mathematics four periods, science four periods, a modern language four periods, an aesthetic subject three periods and physical education two periods would be widely rejected as inadequate, yet even this would only leave 13 periods for optional subjects. This could mean either three optional subjects each with four weekly periods, or four optional subjects with only three weekly periods. The latter arrangement might be acceptable as far as subjects which had already been studied for three years or more were concerned, but would seem quite inadequate for subjects newly introduced to the curriculum such, for example, as Latin, commerce or technical drawing.

If we turn back to the common-core elements of the fourth-year curriculum and allocate them a place more in line with specialist recommendations we could easily get English six, religious education two, mathematics five, modern language five, science nine, aesthetic subjects four and physical education four; in which case there would be no time at all left for optional subjects, much less for private study or project work. With such a curriculum, indeed, the only advanced work which could later be expected to develop would presumably be in the mathematics and science field.

The alternatives quoted are, for most of us, absurd extremes. But where is a reasonable intermediate stage? Or must we abandon some of our forward-looking concepts of a general education? How can we introduce new subjects in a worthwhile and flexible manner? These, and other comparable problems, are both important and extremely practical issues for the future of secondary education, and they require to be fully, expertly and widely ventilated.

In Response To . . .

The editors of Trends *welcome statements by readers in response to articles they have published. Such statements will be published from time to time, together with comments by the author of the original article.*

The *Abitur* Examination

Dr W. Berger of the University of Vienna writes:

My credentials for joining issue on the subject of Mr B. E. Thomas's article in your April issue on *The Abitur Examination in Germany* is a teaching experience of 35 years that has been almost equally divided between English grammar schools and their Austrian equivalents. As, structurally, the Austrian *reifeprüfung* hardly differs from the German *abitur*, it may well stand for the latter for purposes of comparison.

The general point that seems to me to be particularly relevant to the present comparative analysis has been admirably brought out by E. G. Lewis in the same issue of *Trends in Education*. In his article *Relevance of Comparative Education* he stated that comparative studies 'help to make explicit the underlying, often deeply unconscious assumptions on which parents. teachers, administrators and legislators operate'. Ideas engrained in a nation's traditional background often form 'unacknowledged presuppositions', which are rationalised for the sake of the national prestige and tend to perpetuate the educational system.

The internal German *abitur* is a case in point, when seen in the context of the Imperial period which gave birth to it. Imperial Germany with its strictly hierarchical rank-orders could not produce anything but an entirely teacher-controlled *abitur* under ministerial supervision. The state-appointed teacher is an executive officer, under orders from above and exercising power over those below. As a state-official he is entitled to be deferentially addressed by his rank-designation, and still is in principle (however much toned down by modern influences) to his pupils what an army officer is to his private soldiers. This means that even today it is the teacher who is largely responsible, despite all safeguards and checks applied by his superiors, for the promotion of his pupils whom he has the, power to 'plough' or 'pass', to debar from or admit to, the *abitur*. It pays to stand in well with him, and I know of many cases when pupils changed school to avoid a particular teacher. To be sure, there are hardly ever any cases of gross injustice or abuse—though suspicions of favouritism or ill will on the part of the teachers constantly recur—but the teacher may always show his benevolence freely without it being realised that benevolent to some means being unjust to others.

This concept of the teacher as state executive official acting under sanction and supervision of higher authority explains why the idea of public examinations had remained foreign to the German tradition. Should one abrogate the officer's power at the decisive moment when his dispensation of justice is most called for? Inequalities and variations of personal approach, and therefore standards, are considered irremediable—after all, the rights of all successful candidates are equal in that they may freely proceed to universities and prove their mettle there.

It is indeed an unacknowledged and unconscious presupposition that the basis of the German *abitur* should be internal and authoritarian, an ideal towards which teachers naturally incline. Nevertheless, the merits of the internal system arising from the close personal relationship of teachers and pupils have evolved as natural concomitants in the changing spiritual climate of the last decades, and come to be associated with it. It is these positive aspects that appeal to British educationists, dissatisfied as they are with their present external machinery and seeking new vistas; it is those that they see, not their institutional and authoritarian 'matrix', as it were. On the other side of the picture, the growth

in England from casual and irrelevant beginnings of established public examinations has been fed all along by the democratic principle of ensuring fair assessments and equal opportunities for those entering higher and professional education, no matter what their personal, scholastic and local background.

It is against these widely differing cultural backgrounds that comparative appraisals must be made. One of the prerequisites is a well-defined, clear-cut terminology so as not to blur the conceptual boundaries. So I should query the appropriateness of the term 'sixth form' for Continental upper classes of the same age groups as it can only create a wrong idea of likeness. The designation 'sixth form', whatever else it may cover, definitely involves the idea of a bridge between the secondary stage and the next; the characteristic idea of the equivalent continental *Klassen* (again 'forms' would be a misleading translation) is not that of a bridge, but a break between the secondary and tertiary stage of education. Nor is the term 'sixth form' applicable to the German sixth, seventh and eighth years in respect of curriculum and organisation of study. While the former as indicated by its name, is a distinctive unit of instruction, comprising two or three years, the latter are just the uppermost rungs of the ladder, structurally hardly different from the preceding ones. All of them are assigned ministerially apportioned curricula, which are uniformly compulsory for all pupils. There is no streaming or setting in the lower *Klassen*, the only concession in the upper years for differing abilities and interests being that the pupils may opt for somewhat biassed braches of study (in Austria *typen*). These are characterised by the absence or presence of variation in the time given to one or two subjects; otherwise the syllabi are equal in contents, scope and emphasis for all, and the array of subjects remains fixed and inflexible to the end.

This elaboration on Mr Thomas's description is necessary for a more penetrating appreciation of the nature of the German *abitur*. Its professed aim is the imparting of general education. Though its concept still reflects the old German idea of universality, what it amount to at present is, to all intents and purposes, the sum total of a number of more or less conventional school subjects. Modern conditions have made it imperative, I think, to re-conceive the idea and to find new methods of imparting it. One cannot help feeling that the German concept of general education has become another of those 'unacknowledged presuppositions', which methodically rationalised, has become impreganable.

It is often argued that because specialisation takes place in tertiary education the secondary stage should be entirely given to general education which provides a cultural background and also the necessary groundwork for careers, the frequent incidence of occupational retraining, etc. However, the accumulation of autonomous school subjects, which are all studied as thoroughly as possible for their own sake, becomes less and less adequate a means of achieving this in view of the rapidly increasing volume and multiplicity of knowledge and the complexities of modern life. By its very load and diversity, such an accumulation is apt to distract and confuse the minds rather than concentrate on essentials, placing before the pupils the alternatives of nervous overstrain or despondent superficiality.

Synthesis

Subject-division, always artificial and sectional, has a necessary function to fulfil in the lower school because tidy packages of knowledge facilitate the elementary approach. At an advanced level, however, modern educational theory favours the breaking down of the subject barriers to achieve a synthesis of view and avoid fragmentation of knowledge. A sense of wholeness obtained from the study of an area of knowledge is the only substitute in the modern age for the lost universality of the past, which allows young adults to make sense of modern complexities. Hence the significance and value of an intensive or depth study* in one field (that is, two or three related subjects), provided it is complemented by broadly organised and internally examinable general studies which provide the essentials for understanding

*A better term than 'specialisation' which has negative overtones (narrowness, blinkered outlook), especially for the inter-European debate.

modern actualities and of which some excellent schemes are already in operation. The German *abitur* tests the suitability of the candidate for higher studies—which is its avowed purpose—by a retrospective examination proving that he has mastered the curriculum of the *gymnasium*. The implication is that ability thus shown promises sufficient maturity to cope with academic work as well. That this is not so is demonstrated by the high university wastage rate, which is about three times that of the British. The English A-level examination, on the other hand, is designed to prove the suitability for a proposed field of study by testing the candidate's ability in this very field, i.e. it points to the future, to the next stage of education, as would a, necessarily external, scholastic aptitude test.

Mr Thomas emphasises the prominence given by the Germans to the 'ability to think' and the exercise of critical faculty as compared with the mere reproduction of facts. Yet this is hardly something peculiar to the German *abitur*, but a commonly accepted postulate that applies to the A-level in full measure—if anything, the multiple question paper demands highly self-critical faculties, whereas the one question paper of the German written *abitur* just imposes a theme. Also, the generally acclaimed ideal of the priority of the ability to think before mechanical learning is unfortunately one of those which are more effective in programmes and prospectuses than effected in reality. The background knowledge needed for the written papers in languages and mathematics is considerable, and as the testing of critical faculties in an oral examination cannot be carried out *in vacuo*, the range of the background of facts supposed to be known is vaguely that of last year's work. It seems to me that independent critical thought can more freely be exercised in non-teacher-guided tests.

At the beginning of his article, Mr Thomas stated that 'in a German grammar school there is only one examination, the *abitur*', but mentions further down that by the 'weeding-out procedure' of the preceding years only those comparatively few are admitted whose performance has consistently been considered satisfactory. Well, this 'weeding-out' is effected by countless class examinations during and at the end of the year, oral and written ones, the latter being ceremonial and highly consequential tests set according to an official time-table. So the unqualified statement that there is only one examination is certainly misleading.

Nor need one wonder at the very low failure rate since the teachers naturally admit to the final year only those who they can be sure will not let them down. How very misleading comparative observations can be when made without the context of reality, can be seen from the following statement: 'The 70 per cent of passes achieved at A-level compares unfavourably with the German *abitur*, in which more than 90 per cent pass'†. To which must be objected that (1) the German candidates are an élite passed through the sieves of class examinations over years. (2) The university failure rates are much higher and (3) the university courses last much longer than in Britain; (2) and (3) are directly conditioned by the character of the German *abitur*.

Familiarity

Mr Thomas's description of the technicalities of the *abitur* does not always penetrate behind appearances and reach reality. The argument in favour of an internal examination in which the teacher who has taught the pupil has the final say about his future, is, of course, double-edged. The teacher may be the best judge as he knows his pupil so well, and the latter may feel at ease with the familiar figure of the teacher, but so much familiarity involves habit, not to mention subtler psychological interdependencies. The pupil accustomed to the teacher's way of questioning adjusts his mind accordingly, which can hardly be conducive to the 'ability to think independently' of which so much is made. On the other hand, even the most conscientious teacher who would never consciously prepare his students, simply cannot help 'conditioning' them for an examination which he himself will be seen conducting. Hence the failure rate must be kept low. For what is one to think of teachers who having taught the pupil for years fail him in the end ?

†*The Times Literary Supplement*, April 29 1966.

The role of the inspector or other ministerial representatives presiding over the examination is more that of an official supervisor than that of a moderator or an in-built external agency. For not only do approach and attitude vary from inspector to inspector, they are all promoted specialist teachers. So a mathematics or science expert is expected to judge critically a language or history performance or *vice versa*. It is of course urged that as a scholastic expert he should be experienced enough to assess any examination no matter in which subject, but it would be idle to pretend that he or the examining board (consisting of the various subject teachers), however genuine their desire to be just and objective, could possibly be considered 'an adequate safeguard' to maintain equal standards, especially in doubtful cases when his or their votes may be decisive. Needless to say that weak candidates facing expert chairmen are at a natural disadvantage compared with those facing a non-expert chairman, to mention only the most common contingencies.

All these weaknesses inherent in the system would seem to re-affirm the view of those who think that the young person at the threshold of adulthood should be allowed to make the decisive turn from subjective, personal, teacher-guided tutelage to an objective, impersonal and publicly approved test of competence. Mr Thomas rightly has his doubts about the physical strain of oral examinations lasting eight hours or longer, to which no chairman, however conscientious, could possibly attend with the same mental alertness, and the repetitive nature of the questions. All this and the alternating inexpertise of the chairman and members of the examining board at each individual examination combine to reduce sound assessment, and add to the perfunctoriness and internal-authoritarian character of the examination however sincere the intent of all engaged in it to make it worthwhile.

These few comments are not intended to be more than a corrective of Mr Thomas's description of the German *abitur*, and also, perhaps, a warning about the hazards of comparative studies. There are formidable difficulties for a foreign observer in the way of a clear discernment of the different layers of reality so that he can see through appearances and the specious rationalisations of the 'unacknowledged presuppositions' with which he is presented.

From a practical point of view, comparative studies can never result in any gross borrowings because educational systems are national growths. But they can be useful in selecting foreign aspects with a potentiality for being 'grafted in', as it were, within the framework of needed reforms.

There are some genuine virtues in the *abitur*, such as the emphasis on the oral performance supplementing the written test, the more individual mode of such oral examinations, the taking into account of the pupil's past record. If these could be integrated into the English system—say by way of an internally conducted and externally moderated oral—they could indeed modify the objective value of externally set papers and add to the weight of the final grade.

Basil Thomas writes:

My article was concerned only to present plain information on the aims and procedures of the *abitur* as a mode of examining in Germany, not to assess it (this would require prolonged investigation), still less to evaluate secondary education in that country.

Dr Berger wishes, among many other things, to argue that the *abitur* was authoritarian in origin and has remained so because of the persistence of 'unacknowledged presuppositions' and that these represent the 'underlying reality'.

There is no space here to debate a general thesis which leans so heavily on 'unconcious assumption' and on an uncompromising doctrine of destiny by origin. It may still be useful, however, to review some of the facts.

Dr Berger's experience was acquired in English and Austrian schools; if we follow his account there must be considerable and numerous difference between practices in Austria and present day Germany. I have space to mention briefly only a few:

In most parts of the Federal Republic there was no unbroken continuity between the *abitur* of Imperial Germany and that of the present day. After 1945 a centralised examination was introduced in some *Lander*. In the fifties, as a result of consultations

between teachers, parents and the Ministry, there was general agreement to prefer internal examinations. In *Land* Hessen the new regulations of 1964 were worked out by an elected body representing the parents (*Landeselternbeirat*), the teachers and the Ministry.

Dr Berger's picture of the teacher as a state official entitled to be deferentially addressed by his rank-designation' and still 'in principle what an army officer is to his private soldiers', if it was once true, is not an accurate description of German teachers today.

It is not true that a teacher has the power to debar a pupil from the examination; this was so some years ago but now every pupil in the *Oberprima* has to be automatically admitted to the *abitur* if he applies. As for 'ploughing' and 'passing' the procedure is such as to make abitrary action by any single teacher impossible.

No single teacher can decide on promotions. It is done by the collective action of *all* the teachers concerned after at least three formal meetings in the year. There are additional safeguards which cannot be described in a brief reply.

Dr Berger refers to 'countless examinations . . . ceremonial and highly consequentrial tests, set according to an official timetable'. This may be so in Austria. In Germany there is no official time-table, tests are routine, set according to the convenience and conscience of the teacher. In the *Oberstufe* there may be three to six *klassenarbeiten* in the year. All this is part of the pupil's record of achievement.

Dr Berger says that the *abitur* is '. . . a retrospective examination proving that he has mastered the curriculum of the *Gymnasium*', whereas the British Advanced Level examination 'points to the future'. The facts suggest the contrary; the avowed purpose of the *abitur* is to test the pupil's ability to think for himself (how far it succeeds is a matter for investigation), and in practice the examination, unlike the Advanced Level examination, does not seek to test the *extent* of a pupil's knowledge of the material of the syllabus.

It is not true that 'the range of the background of facts supposed to be known is vaguely that of last year's work.' Whenever possible, unseen texts are given and topics not previously dealt with in the course are discussed in both oral and written examinations. Reproduction of previously taught facts is excluded.

Investigations in Germany do not support any connection between high wastage rate at the university and examining at the *abitur*. Recently the *Wissenschaftsrat*, a council representing the universities and the Ministry, published a report in which the causes are attributed to conditions at the universities, and which made suggestions for reform.

There is not much use in discussing whether the *Oberstufe* should be called a sixth form or not (my own use of it was shorthand) but Dr Berger is mistaken in seeing it 'not as a bridge but a break between the secondary and the tertiary stage of education'. Recent developments in the *Reform der Oberstufe* emphasise that at least the last two years—*die Primen*—should form one unit and that the work and methods of the last three years must be radically different in character from those of the previous years. This can be followed in numerous publications, and attendance at classes support the view that the *Oberstufe* has a special character.

Dr Berger partly misunderstands the role of the Ministry representative in the oral examination. His task is not to pronounce final judgment on the candidate in all subjects but as far as possible to ensure some acceptable degree of comparability of standards with the other schools where he presides. He is only one of three who award the mark. It should not be forgotten that the examination is conducted in the presence of all the teachers who have taught the candidates during the previous two years.

Comparability of standards and 'justice to pupils' are complex and difficult subjects. My article was not concerned to attack or defend the German approach to this but to describe it, briefly. There seems, however, no reason not to respect their conviction that, in a difficult operation such as examining, the internal examination does more justice on balance to the individual candidate than a centralised external examination. We may like or dislike aspects of the *abitur* as a mode of examining—if we experiment with any it will be in our own way, in response to our own practical needs.

Reviews

Grouping in Education
Edited by Alfred Yates
UNESCO Institute of Education, Hamburg 96s.

Grouping in the Elementary School
Edited by Anne Morgensten
Pitman Publishing Corporation NY 1$ 75c.

'Grouping', in both of these books, denotes ways of distributing pupils for teaching purposes. The UNESCO publication considers both the internal organisation of schools and the allocation of pupils to different types of school. Miss Morgensten's book is directed at the internal organisation of American elementary schools. The most valuable feature of both books is that they present a selection of substantial abstracts from a mass of research literature.

Grouping in Education is the outcome of an international conference at Hamburg in 1964. In style, readability, and depth of argument it is much superior to the conventional conference report. Part I surveys current practices in Europe and the USA, reflects on the problems in the light of published research, and summarises the conference findings. Part II consists of four invited papers, fifty abstracts of research studies, and an extensive bibliography. The preface is wisely modest in supposing that 'it would be too much to expect the book to answer all relevant questions as to grouping procedures'; but the book may fairly claim to offer the serious enquirer helpful signposts through the jungle of 'research', and it signals more than one useful warning that the issues under debate are apt to provoke impassioned partisanship among the professional educators no less than the lay public.

Part I suffers initially from an attempt to be too all-embracing. It starts out to consider 'grouping' policies based variously on geographical location; age; sex; religion; race; language; socio-economic status; special needs or handicaps; manpower requirements; ability and attainment. Many of these forms of grouping have to be dealt with summarily, and the sustained discussion centres on division by ability and attainment, the rival virtues of homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping. Again, there are a number of large generalisations about national trends and characteristics of schools, to some of which one would not assent without reserve, in the case of this country, and some which, it may be guessed, are equally misleading, without qualification, in respect of other, less familiar, national systems. But this is a limitation to which most comparative international publications are liable and which can be allowed for by the reader.

In summing up its reading of the evidence, the conference discerns—

(1) that although the available research data on inter-school grouping—i.e. the selective allocation of pupils to different types of school—is sparse, and although the needed longitudinal, comparative study of different patterns of allocation is unlikely to be undertaken, there is a marked general tendency to abandon early selection; and
(2) that research into forms of grouping within schools—grading, streaming, tracking, setting—has been abundant but inconclusive.

The reasons for the indeterminate nature of the evidence are interesting in themselves. In many cases, the small scale and inadequate design of the enquiries have severely limited their significance. Or, whereas many of the arguments for and against types of grouping refer to social adjustment, self-concepts, motivation, personal behaviour, results are commonly assessed in terms of standardised attainment tests, presumably because satisfactory measures of less tangible results have proved difficult to devise. In many experiments, the attitudes, confidence, and professional competence of individual teachers have proved to be more significant than the form of organisation adopted—which suggests that any large scale change of policy must involve extensive consultation with teachers and a supporting programme of in-service training.

It seems absolutely clear that few organisational experiments have taken sufficient account of curriculum content and teaching method. If, for example, as

t ween streamed classes, there has been no significant variation of curriculum content or teaching approaches, it would seem that teachers have failed to utilise the very advantages that 'streaming' is intended to promote. If, on the other hand, the programmes are highly differentiated, it becomes arguable that the system is misleadingly self-validating, because some groups enjoy a richer diet than others.

Yet some way has to be found out of this apparent impasse. No country appears ready to eliminate all forms of differentiation whether by 'courses', 'streams', 'tracks', or types of institution, at least at the upper stages of secondary education. Evidently, differences, at some stage, have to become respectable. Most European countries seem inclined to defer the moment of decision, but the actual ages and stages at which decision is taken vary widely.

Here, the report is not able to stray beyond its brief to consider what is surely a highly relevant factor: the nature of the university or equivalent higher education which is available following the secondary course. Whether a student at 18 may normally look to three, five, or more years of higher education must have some bearing on how he spends the years immediately preceding; and the length of the higher stage itself, and the percentage of students entering it, must relate to the national, economic circumstances. A universal, optimum pattern seems unlikely.

A kindred point is made in a chapter which argues that the determinants of policy are commonly political and social rather than strictly educational. According to historical circumstances, there will be pressures on the schools to create a society which either reinforces or modifies the larger, external society. Organisational structures in themselves are neither good nor bad, but more or less effective and more or less acceptable in relation to agreed goals.

Grouping in the Elementary School consists entirely of a dozen abstracts, covering some of the same ground as the UNESCO publication, but limited in its applications mainly to the primary school. Some sections, too, must be understood specifically in the context of a 'grade' system, with the attendant complications of prescribed curricula and problems of annual promotion or demotion. There is, however, in the first abstract, a useful historical sketch, of more than local interest, tracing the swings of educational theory. And one section of the book is devoted to developments in team teaching, at which the UNESCO book glances briefly.

Both books illustrate abundantly a continuing tension in education between a political need to maximise common experience and to stress equality, and the individual's need to be recognised as a unique personality with distinctive interests and talents. Some of the strongest arguments, on social grounds, against selective grouping, may also be accompanied by equally strong arguments for highly personalized, individual, instruction programmes which would theoretically carry differentiation to the limit, with every student in a group of one.

In practice, a major field for further research seems to lie precisely in identifying the different learning activities for which individual study and work in groups of various sizes and composition would be most appropriate; which brings us back to curriculum. The final comment may be taken from A. H. Passow, to whose surveys of the research field both books are indebted: 'Real differences in academic growths result from what is taught and learned in the classroom. It is, therefore, on the differentiation and appropriate selection of content and method of teaching that the emphasis must be placed. Grouping procedures then become effective servants of the curriculum'. **M.J.M.**

The School Library
HMSO 3s. 6d.

The Library in the Primary School
School Library Association 11s. 6d.

School Libraries: a short manual
by C. A. Stott
Cambridge University Press 15s.

Today's ferment in the world of education understandably concentrates attention on new and sometimes exciting experiments and developments. It would, however, be sad—and surely, in the long run, a serious loss—if television, programmed learning, teaching machines and all the other offspring of 'educational technology' were to

distract teachers' minds entirely from thought about the part books and libraries should play in their professional activities.

Pamphlet No. 21, *The School Library*, was first published in 1952 and recently went out of print after maintaining a steady sale for some thirteen or fourteen years. Its thesis was such that, except for very minor details, it did not become out of date as do many of its companions. Lacking, perhaps, the glamour of novelty, it was nevetheless widely held to offer a wise and essentially humane consideration of a topic of lasting importance: whatever the contemporary interests and fashions, its text was and remains its first sentence—'European culture is based upon a tradition of book learning'.

This revised edition therefore treats the original text with respect as a statement of the philosophy of books and libraries which could hardly be bettered. The key chapters on the growth and development of school libraries and on 'reference, study and recreative reading' have been retained. The main changes are to be found in Chapter Four, 'The Conditions' (which deals with such questions as planning and location, equipment, selection and management) and in the new appendix, 'Some Practical Suggestions', intended chiefly for teachers newly taking over responsibility for their school libraries. It is to be hoped that these will be of sufficient interest to persuade possesors of the original edition to obtain for themselves this present reissue. With its complementary publication, Pamphlet No. 45, *The Use of Books*, it should enjoy another long lease of life and usefulness.

Chapter One of *The Use of Books*, began with the words, 'In the last ten years one of the most remarkable features in primary schools has been the spread of the kind of book provision which was described in Pamphlet No. 21 as "having been pioneered in a very limited number of schools".' This immensely gratifying feature was not unaccompanied by certain misgivings on the part of those with this particular cause at heart. During the 1950s a temporary easing of pressure on accommodation led an appreciable number of head teachers to convert a spare room into a library. Shelves were sometimes enthusiastically filled by denuding classrooms of books, the arrangement of these books in their new home was often haphazard or according to some improvised, home-made method and there seemed a risk that 'library periods', 'library practice', schemes of 'library instruction' and so on, would be adopted in imitation of secondary schools where their value had already proved doubtful.

The publication of the SLA pamphlet, *The Library in the Primary School*, of which the first (1958) edition sold 12,000 copies, did a great deal towards clarifying the arguments for and against central or main libraries in primary schools and pointed the way to the compromise that seems best suited to the needs of such schools. In addition, it made available to primary teachers a thoughtful, comprehensive and authoritative review of practical problems of management, equipment and selection which, followed up by further pamphlets, *Using Books in the Primary School* and *Primary School Library Books: an annotated list*, did much to encourage sensible practice and to offset the influence of the cheapjack books of quiz-type exercises which some publishers expected would find a ready market.

The second edition of *The Library in the Primary School* is a reprint of the original text but with a revised bibliography and an additional Introduction, by Mr Osborne, which helpfully brings up to date comments on some of the issues discussed in the main body of the work. This new edition will be very welcome and should sustain and widen the good influence of its predecessor.

C. A. Stott, as founder of the School Library Association and for many years its Honorary Secretary, has every right to be regarded as the elder statesman of the school library movement. His short manual deserves to continue to be the essential *vademecum* of every school librarian.

To the teacher newly charged with the responsibility for a school library, Chapter Three ('Administration and Routine') is an invaluable source of guidance. Its virtue is that it gives sufficient information to ensure proper management of a specialised —and, usually, unfortunately, small— library without leading into unnecessarily deep waters of classification, cataloguing

and the subtleties of professional librarianship. That 'the accession book is an absolutely necessary record of stock' is the one statement in this very useful chapter that might nowadays be questioned.

There are other revisions that might have been made to the text which is basically that of the 1947 edition. Increases in the cost of books, increased library allowances (though still rarely adequate) made by LEAs and the latest recommendations (March, 1965) of the Association of Education Committees have made the figures given in Chapter Four (Finance) very out of date. Though not many Authorities have appointed full-time ex-teacher Library Advisers (and opinion still differs over the wisdom of this), the discouraging comment about professional librarians does little justice to the admirable help given to schools in many parts of the country by those in charge of Public Libraries' School Library Service.

These are relatively small, though not unimportant, matters. It is, perhaps, Chapter Five (The Uses of the Library) which may be felt to be most out-of-step with present opinion. Though it describes practices which still command widespread observance, the recommendations about 'library periods' and isolated exercises in the techniques of finding out information give these an exaggerated importance. The impression is given that the subjects of the curriculum might be exploited to provide opportunities and material for library work: 'it is of little moment what particular material is used'. This is surely to ignore priorities: the library exists, in this context, to serve as an integral element of the teaching method of subjects, not for its use to be regarded as a skill in its own right.

In spite of these reservations, this little book remains, especially with its new bibliography, the most helpful and authoritative (and, be it said, respected) manual for teacher librarians. **A.D.A.**

Middle School Choice

by Michael Smith and Susan Minay

Careers Research and Advisory Centre 5s.

This booklet is written by a deputy headmaster and a member of the Advisory Centre's staff. It is intended primarily for the guidance of middle school pupils making a choice of GCE O level and CSE subjects, but should be of interest to parents and teachers. The style is clear and the advice given is generally sound, though the need for compression has led to over-simplification in a few cases, as in the treatment of technician courses in further education.

The introductory section gives background information on GCE O level and CSE examinations and suggests ten key questions for the pupil to consider in consultation with parents, teachers and other advisers. The main part of the booklet is a discussion of these questions, one example being the problem of deciding which subjects should be taken at CSE and which at GCE. The three following sections are guides dealing with the entrance requirements of professional bodies, the qualifications required for various careers, and detailed information on CSE examinations. A list of references to further information is provided.

The booklet is a useful attempt to collect information from many different sources and to discuss the problems of GCE O level and CSE choice in a way which should help the middle school pupil at this critical stage in his education. **M.B.**

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Signposts of change in curriculum and examinations

Schools Council publications, of which some 30 titles are available, range over a wide field. They describe new techniques and approaches in different areas of the primary and secondary school curriculum; new lines of curricular enquiry and development for discussion and further exploration.

Some recently published titles:

Examinations Bulletins

No. 15 *Teachers' experience of school-based examining.*

No. 16 *The Certificate of Secondary Education—Trial Examinations: Written English.*

No. 17 *The Certificate of Secondary Education—Trial Examinations: Religious Knowledge.*

Curriculum Bulletins

No. 2 *A school approach to technology.* A fully documented and illustrated study aimed to help teachers in providing pupils with opportunities for applying their learning creatively.

Working Papers

No. 10 *Curriculum development.* Teachers' groups and centres. Notes for Guidance and Support.

No. 11 *Society and the young school leaver.* Study of new developments in humanities teaching in relation to the raising of the school leaving age.

No. 12 *Teaching English to children of immigrants.* First step in a national curriculum development project.

No. 13 *The educational implications of social and economic change.* A report of the 1966 Nottingham Conference sponsored by the Council.

Separate publications, printed bilingually, are being issued by the Welsh Committee of the Schools Council.

The publications listed above and most other Council literature are published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office and can be obtained from Government bookshops in London (post orders to PO Box 569, SE1), Edinburgh, Cardiff, Belfast, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, or through any bookseller.

Further information about Council publications can be obtained from the Schools Council, 38, Belgrave Square, London SW1. (Telephone BELgravia 4801)